

THE
COMPLAINT:
W. OR, C
NIGHT-THOUGHTS
ON
LIFE, DEATH,
AND
IMMORTALITY.

Sunt lacrymae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.

VIRG.

Printed in the Year M. DCC. LV.

THE
COMPLAINT
OF
NIGHT-THOUGHTS
OF
LIFE, DEATH,
AND
IMMORTALITY.

2nd Edition, revised, at author's request.
1867.



Printed in the Year M.DCC.LXV.

NIGHT THE FIRST,
ON

LIFE, DEATH, and IMMORTALITY.

HUMBLY INSCRIB'D

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

ARTHUR ONSLOW, Esq;

SPEAKER of the House of Commons.

NIGHT THE FIRST,

OF

LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

HOMER'S ILLIAD

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

ARTHUR OWEN, Esq.

Secretary of the House of Commons.

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T H E
C O M P L A I N T,

N I G H T T H E F I R S T.

TIR'D nature's sweet restorer, balmy *sleep*!

He, like the world, his ready visit pays,
Where fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes:
Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
And lights on lids unfully'd with a tear.

From short, (as usual) and disturb'd repose,
I wake: how happy they who wake no more!
Yet that were vain, if dreams infect the grave.
I wake, emerging from a sea of dreams
Tumultuous; where my wreck'd desponding thought
From wave to wave of *fancy'd* misery,
At random drove, her helms of reason lost:
Tho' now restor'd, 'tis only change of pain,
(A bitter change;) severer for severe:
The *day* too short for my distress! and *night*,
Even in the *Zenith* of her dark domain,
Is sunshine to the colour of my fate.

Night, fable goddess! from her *ebon* throne,
In rayless majesty, now stretches forth
Her leaden scepter o'er a slumb'ring world:
Silence, how dead! and darkness, how profound!
Nor eye, nor list'ning ear an object finds:
Creation sleeps. 'Tis as the general pulse
Of life stood still, and nature made a pause;
An awful pause! prophetic of her end.
And let her prophecy be soon fulfill'd;
Fate! drop the curtain; I can lose no more.

Silence, and *darkness*! solemn sisters! twine

From ancient *night*, whose nurse the tender thought
 To *reason*, and on *reason* build *resolve*,
 (That column of true majesty in man)
 Assist me : I will thank you in the grave ;
 The grave, your kingdom : *there* this frame shall fall
 A victim sacred to your dreary shrine.

But what are ye ? THOU, who didst put to flight
 Primeval *silence*, when the morning-stars
 Exulting, shouted o'er the rising ball ;
 O THOU ! whose word from solid *darkness* struck
 That spark, the sun ; strike wisdom from my soul ;
 My soul which flies to thee, her trust, her treasure,
 As misers to their gold, while others rest.

Thro' this opaque of *nature*, and of *soul*,
 This double night, transmit one pitying ray,
 To lighten, and to cheer. O lead my mind,
 (A mind that fain would wander from its woe)
 Lead it thro' various scenes of *life*, and *death*,
 And from each scene, the noblest truths inspire.
 Nor less inspire my *conduct*, than my *song* ;
 Teach my best reason, reason ; my best will,
 Teach rectitude ; and fix my firm resolve
 Wisdom to wed, and pay her long arrear.
 Nor let the vial of thy vengeance pour'd
 On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.

The bell strikes *One*. We take no note of time,
 But from its loss. To give it then a tongue,
 Is wise in man. As if an angel spoke,
 I feel the solemn sound. If heard aright,
 It is the *knell* of my departed hours ;
 Where are they ? with the years beyond the flood ;
 It is the *signal* that demands dispatch ;
 How much is to be done ? my hopes and fears
 Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge



Look down——on what? a fathomless abyss;
A dread eternity! how surely *mine*?
And can eternity belong to me,
Poor pensioner on the bounties of an hour?

How poor? how rich? how abject? how august?
How complicate? how wonderful is man?
How passing wonder HE, who made him such?
Who center'd in our make such strange extremes?
From different natures, marvelously mixt,
Connexion exquisite of distant worlds!
Distinguisht *link* in being's endless chain!
Midway from *nothing* to the *Deity*!
A beam ethereal sully'd, and absorpt!
Tho' sully'd, and dishonour'd, still divine!
Dim miniature of greatness absolute!
An heir of glory! a frail child of dust!
Helpless immortal! insect *infinite*!

A worm! a god!——I tremble at myself,
And in my self am lost! at home a stranger,
Thoughts wanders up and down, surpriz'd, aghast,
And wond'ring at her *own*: how reason reels?
O what a miracle to man is man,
Triumphantly distress'd? what joy, what dread?
Alternately transported, and alarm'd!
What can preserve my life? or what destroy?
An angel's arm can't snatch me from the grave;
Legions of angels can't confine me there.

'Tis past conjecture; all things rise in proof:
While o'er my limbs *sleep's* soft dominion spread,
What, tho' my soul phantastic measures trod,
O'er fairy fields; or mourn'd along the gloom
Of pathless woods; or down the craggy steep
Hurl'd headlong, swam with pain the mantled pool;
Or scal'd the cliff; or danc'd on hollow winds,

With antic shapes, wild natives of the brain ?
 Her ceaseless flight, tho' devious, speaks her nature
 Of subtler essence than the trodden clod ;
 Active, aerial, tow'ring, unconfin'd,
 Unfetter'd with her gross companion's fall :
 Ev'n silent night proclaims my soul *immortal* :
 Ev'n silent night proclaims eternal day :
 For human weal, Heav'n husbands all events,
 Dull sleep instructs, nor sport vain dreams in vain.

Why then *their* loss deplore, that are not lost ?
 Why wanders wretched thought their tombs around,
 In infidel distress ? Are *angels* there ?
 Slumbers, rak'd up in dust, ethereal fire ?
 They live ! they greatly live a life on earth
 Unkindl'd, unconceiv'd ; and from an eye
 Of tenderness, let heav'nly pity fall
 On me, more justly number'd-with the dead.
This is the desert, *this* the solitude :
 How populous ? how vital, is the grave ?
This is creation's melancholy vault,
 The vale funereal, the sad *Cypress* gloom ;
 The land of apparitions, empty shades !
 All, all on earth is *shadow*, all beyond
 Is *substance* ; the reverse is folly's creed :
 How solid all, where change shall be no more ?

This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
 The twilight of our day, the vestibule ;
Life's theatre as yet is shut, and death,
 Strong death alone can heave the massy bar,
 This gross impediment of clay remove,
 And make us, embryos of existence, free.
 From *real* life, but little more remote
 Is *He*, not yet a candidate for light,
 The *future* embryo, slumbering in his fire,

Embryos we must be, till we burst the shell,
Yon ambient, azure shell, and spring to life;
The life of gods; O transport! and of man.

Yet man, fool man! *here* buries all his thoughts;
Inters celestial hopes without one sigh:
Prisoner of earth, and pent beneath the moon,
Here pinions all his wishes; wing'd by heaven
To fly at infinite; and reach it there,
Where *Seraphs* gather immortality,
On life's fair tree, fast by the throne of God:
What golden joys ambrosial clust'ring glow
In HIS full beam, and ripen for the just,
Where momentary ages are no more?
Where time and pain, and chance and death expire?
And is it in the flight of threescore years,
To push eternity from human thought,
And smother souls immortal in the dust?
A soul immortal, spending all her fires,
Wasting her strength in strenuous idleness,
Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd,
At aught this scene can threaten, or indulge,
Resembles *ocean* into tempest wrought,
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.

Where falls this censure? It o'erwhelms myself.
How was my heart encrusted by the world?
O how self-fetter'd was my groveling soul?
How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round
In silken thought, which reptile *fancy* spun,
Till darken'd *reason* lay quite clouded, o'er
With soft conceit of endless comfort *here*,
Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the skies?

Night-visions may befriend, (as sung above)
Our *waking* dreams are fatal: how I dreamt
Of things impossible? (could sleep do more?)

Of joys perpetual in perpetual change ?
 Of stable pleasures on the tossing wave ?
 Eternal sunshine in the storms of life ?
 How richly were my noon-tide trances hung
 With gorgeous tapestries of pictur'd joys ?
 Joy behind joy, in endless perspective !
 Till at death's toll, whose restless iron tongue
 Calls daily for his millions at a meal,
 Starting I woke, and found myself undone.
 Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture ?
 The *cobweb'd* cottage with its ragged wall
 Of mould'ring mud, is *royalty* to me !
 The *Spider's* most attenuated thread
 Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie
 On earthly bliss ; it breaks at every breeze.

O ye blest scenes of *permanent* delight !
 Full, above measure ! lasting beyond bound !
 A *perpetuity* of bliss, is bliss.
 Could you, so rich in rapture, fear an end,
 That ghastly thought would drink up all your joy,
 And quite unparadise the realms of light.
 Safe are you lodg'd above these rowling spheres ;
 The baleful influence of whose giddy dance
 Sheds sad vicissitude on all beneath.
 Here terms the revolutions every hour ;
 And rarely for the better ; or the best,
 More mortal than the common births of fate.
 Each *moment* has its sickle, emulous
 Of *time's* enormous scythe, whose ample sweep
 Strikes empires from the root ; each *moment* plays
 His little weapon in the narrower sphere
 Of sweet domestic comfort, and cuts down
 The fairest bloom of sublunary bliss.

Bliss ! sublunary bliss !—proud words ! and vain :

Implicit treason to divine decree !
 A bold invasion of the rights of heaven !
 I clasp'd the phantoms, and I found them air.
 O had I weigh'd it e'er my fond embrace !
 What darts of agony had mis'd my heart ?

Death ! Great proprietor of all ! 'tis thine
 To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.
 The sun himself by thy permission shines,
 And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere.
 Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust
 Thy *partial* quiver on a mark so *mean* ?
 Why thy *peculiar* rancour wreck'd on *me* ?
 Infatiate archer ! could not *one* suffice ?
 Thy shaft flew *thrice* ; and *thrice* my peace was slain ;
 And thrice, e'er thrice yon moon had fill'd her horn.
 O *Cynthia* ! why so pale ? Dost thou lament
 Thy wretched neighbour ? Grieve, to see thy wheel
 Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life ?
 How wanes my *borrow'd* bliss ? from *fortunes's* smile,
 Precarious courtesy ! not *virtue's* sure,
 Self-given, *solar*, ray of sound delight.

In every vary'd posture, place, and hour,
 How widow'd every thought of every joy ?
 Thought, busy thought ! too busy for my peace !
 'Thro' the dark postern of time long clasp'd,
 Led softly, by the stillness of the night,
 Led, like a murderer, (and such it proves !)
 Strays (wretched rover !) o'er the pleasing *past* ;
 In quest of wretchedness perversely strays ;
 And finds all desert *now* ; and meets the ghosts
 Of my departed joys, a numerous train !
 I rue the riches of my former fate ;
 Sweet comfort's blasted clusters I lament ;
 I tremble at the blessings once so dear ;

14 THE COMPLAINT:

And every pleasure pains me to the heart.

Yet why *complain*? or why *complain* for one?

Hangs out the sun his lustre but for me,

The *single* man? are angels all beside?

I mourn for millions: 'tis the common lot;

In *this* shape, or in *that*, has fate entail'd

The mother's throws on all of woman born,

Not more the children, than sure heirs of *pain*.

War, famine, pest, volcano, storm, and fire,

Intestine broils, *oppression*, with her heart

Wrapt up in triple brass, besiege mankind:

God's image disinherited of day,

Here plung'd in mines, forgets a sun was made;

There, beings deathless as their haughty lord,

Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life;

And plough the winter's wave, and reap despair:

Some, for hard masters, broken under arms,

In battle lopt away, with half their limbs,

Beg bitter bread thro' realms their valour sav'd,

If so the tyrant, or his minion, doom:

Want, and incurable *disease*, (fell pair!)

On hopeless multitudes remorseless seize

At once; and make a refuge of the grave:

How groaning *Hospitals* eject their dead?

What numbers groan for sad admission there?

What numbers, once in *fortune's* lap high-fed,

Sollicit the cold hand of charity?

To shock us more, solicit it in vain?

Ye silken sons of pleasure! since in pains

You rue more modish visits, visit *here*,

And breathe from your debauch: *give*, and reduce

Surfeit's dominion o'er you: but so great

Your impudence, you blush at what is right!

Happy! did sorrow seize on *such* alone:

Not *prudence* can defend, nor *virtue* save;
 Disease invades the chastest temperance;
 And punishment the guiltless; and alarm
 Thro' thickest shades pursues the fond of peace.
 Man's caution often into danger turns,
 And his guard falling, crushes him to death.
 Not *happiness* itself makes good her name;
 Our very wishes give us not our wish.
 How distant oft the thing we doat on most,
 From that for which we doat, *felicity*?
 The *smoothest* course of nature has its pains,
 And *truest* friends, thro' error, wound our rest;
 Without misfortune, what calamities?
 And what hostilities, without a foe?
 Nor are foes wanting to the best on earth:
 But endless is the list of human ills,
 And sighs might sooner fail, than cause to sigh.

A part how small of the terraqueous globe
 Is tenanted by man? the rest a waste,
 Rocks, deserts, frozen seas, and burning sands;
 Wild haunts of monsters, poisons, stings, and death:
 Such is earth's melancholy map! But far
 More sad! this earth is a true map of *man*:
 So bounded are its haughty lord's *delights*
 To woe's wide empire; where deep troubles toss;
 Loud sorrows howl, envenom'd passions bite,
 Ravenous calamities our vitals seize,
 And threat'ning fate wide-opens to devour.

What then am I, who sorrow for *myself*?
 In age, in infancy, from others aid
 Is all our hope; to teach us to be *kind*.
 That, nature's first, last lesson to mankind:
 The selfish heart deserves the pain it feels;
 More generous sorrow, while it sinks, exalts,

And conscious virtue mitigates the pang.
 Nor virtue, more than *prudence*, bids me give
 Swoln thought a *second* channel; who divide,
 They weaken too, the torrent of their grief:
 Take then, O world! thy much indebted tear:
 How sad a sight is human happiness
 To those whose thought can pierce beyond an hour?
 O thou! whate'er thou art, whose heart exults!
 Would'st thou I should congratulate thy fate?
 I know thou would'st; thy pride demands it from me.
 Let thy pride pardon, what thy nature needs,
 The salutary censure of a friend.
 Thou happy *wretch*! by blindness art thou blest;
 By dotage dandled to perpetual smiles.
 Know, *smiler*! at thy peril art thou pleas'd
 Thy pleasure is the promise of thy pain.
Misfortune, like a creditor severe,
 But rises in demand for her delay;
 She makes a scourge of past prosperity,
 To sting thee more, and double thy distress.
Lorenzo, fortune makes her court to thee;
 Thy fond heart dances, while the *Syren* sings.
 Dear is thy welfare; think me not unkind;
 I would not damp, but to secure thy joys:
 Think not that *fear* is sacred to the storm:
 Stand on thy guard against the *smiles* of fate.
 Is heav'n tremendous in its frown? most sure;
 And in its favours formidable too;
 Its favours here are trials, not rewards;
 A call to duty, not discharge from care;
 And should alarm us, full as much as woes;
 Awake us to their *cause*, and *consequence*:
 And make us tremble, weigh'd with our defect;
 Awe nature's tumult, and chastise her joys,

Lest while we clasp, we kill them; nay invert
To worse than *simple* misery, their charms;
Revolted joys, like foes in civil war,
Like bosom friendships to resentment sour'd,
With rage envenom'd rise against our peace.
Beware what earth calls happiness; beware
All joys, but joys that never can expire;
Who builds on less than an *immortal* base,
Fond as he seems, condemns his joys to death.

Mine dy'd with thee, *Philander*! thy last sigh
Dissolv'd the charm; the disenchant'd earth
Lost all her lustre. Where, her glittering towers?
Her golden mountains, where? all darken'd down
To naked waste; a dreary vale of tears;
The great magician's dead! Thou poor, pale piece
Of out-cast earth, in darkness! what a change
From yesterday! Thy darling hope so near,
(Long-labour'd prize!) O how ambition flush'd
Thy glowing cheek? ambition truly great,
Of virtuous praise: Death's subtle seed within,
(Sly, treacherous miner!) working in the dark,
Smil'd at thy well-concerted scheme, and beckon'd
The worm to riot on that rose so red,
Unfaded e'er it fell; one moment's prey!

Man's foresight is *conditionally* wise;
Lorenzo! wisdom into folly turns
Oft, the first instant, its idea fair
To labouring thought is born. How dim our eyes
The *present* moment terminates our sight;
Clouds, thick as those on doomsday, drown the rest;
We penetrate, we prophesy in vain.
Time is dealt out by particles; and each,
E'er mingled with the streaming sands of life,
By fate's inviolable oath is sworn

18 THE COMPLAINT.

Deep silence, "Where eternity begins."

By nature's law, what may be, may be *now*;
There's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thought can rise,
Than man's presumption on to-morrow's dawn?
Where is to-morrow? in another world.
For numbers this is certain; the reverse
Is sure to none; and yet on this *perhaps*,
This *peradventure*, infamous for lies,
As on a rock of adamant we build
Our mountain hopes; spin out eternal schemes,
As we the fatal sisters cou'd out-spin,
And, big with life's futurities, expire.

Not even *Philander* had bespoke his shroud;
Nor had he cause, a warning was deny'd;
How many fall as sudden, not as safe?
As sudden, tho' for years admonisht home
Of humanills the last extreme beware,
Beware, *Lorenzo*! a *slow-sudden* death.
How dreadful that deliberate surprize?
Be wise to-day, 'tis madness to defer;
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wisdom is push'd out of life:
Procrastination is the thief of time,
Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vast concerns of an eternal scene.
If not so frequent, would not this be strange?
That 'tis so frequent, *this* is stranger still.

Of man's miraculous mistakes, this bears
The palm, "That all men are about to live:"
For ever on the brink of being born.
All pay themselves the compliment to think
They, one day, shall not drivel; and their pride

On this reversion takes up ready praise;
 At least, their own; their future selves applaud;
 How excellent that life they ne'er will lead
 Time lodg'd in their own hands is *folly's* vails;
 That lodg'd in *fate's*, to *wisdom* they consign;
 The thing they can't but *purpose*, they *postpone*;
 'Tis not in *folly*, not to scorn a fool;
 And scarce in human *wisdom* to do no more.
 All *promise* is poor dilatory man,
 And that thro' every stage; when young, indeed,
 In full content, we sometimes nobly rest,
 Unanxious for *ourselves*; and only wish,
 As dutious sons, our *fathers* were more wise.
 At *thirty* man *suspects* himself a fool;
 Knows it at *forty*, and reforms his plan;
 At *fifty* chides his infamous delay,
 Pushes his prudent purpose to *resolve*;
 In all the magnanimity of thought
 Resolves; and re-resolves: then dies the same.
 And why? because he thinks himself *immortal*:
 All men think all men mortal, but themselves;
 Themselves, when some alarming shock of fate
 Strikes thro' their wounded hearts the sudden dread;
 But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
 Soon close, where past the shaft, no trace is found;
 As from the *wing* no scar the sky retains;
 The parted wave no furrow from the *keel*;
 So dies in human hearts the thought of death:
 Even with the tender tear which nature sheds
 O'er those we love, we drop it in their grave.
 Can I forget *Philander*? That were strange;
 O my full heart! — But should I give it vent,
 The longest night, tho' longer far, would fail,
 And the *lark* listen to my *midnight* song.

The spritely *lark's* shrill mattin wakes the morn;
Grief's sharpest thorn hard-pressing on my breast,
 I strive, with wakeful melody, to cheer
 The sullen gloom, sweet *Philomel!* like thee,
 And call the stars to listen: every star
 Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay.
 Yet be not vain; there are who thine excell,
 And charm thro' distant ages: wrap in shade,
 Prisoner of darkness! to the silent hours,
 How often I repeat their rage divine,
 To lull my griefs, and steal my heart from woe?
 I rowl their raptures, but not catch their flame.
 Dark, tho' not blind, like thee, *Maeonides!*
 Or *Milton!* thee; ah cou'd I reach your strain!
 Or *his*, who made *Maeonides* our own.
 Man too he sung: immortal man I sing;
 Oft bursts my song beyond the bounds of life;
 What, now, but immortality can please?
 O had he press'd his theme, pursu'd the track,
 Which opens out of darkness into day!
 O had he mounted on his wing of fire,
 Soar'd, where I sink, and sung immortal man!
 How had it blest mankind? and rescu'd me?

COMPLAINT

NIGHT THE SECOND.

ON

TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP.

HUMBLY INSCRIB'D

To the Right Honourable

The Earl of WILMINGTON.

NIGHT THE SECOND.

ON

TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP

HUMBLY INSCRIBED

To the Right Honourable

The Earl of Wilmington.

THE
COMPLAINT

NIGHT THE SECOND.

“WHEN the cock crew, he wept” — Smote
by that eye,

Which looks on me, on all : that pow'r, who bids
This midnight centinel with clarion shrill,
Emblem of that which shall awake the dead,
Rouse souls from slumber, into thoughts of heav'n,
Shall I too weep ? where then is fortitude ?
And fortitude abandon'd, where is man ?
I know the terms on which he sees the light :
He that is born, is list'd : life is war ;
Eternal war with woe : who bears it best,
Deserves it least. — On other themes I'll dwell,
Lorenzo ! let me turn my thoughts on thee,
And thine, on themes may profit : profit there,
Where most thy need : themes, too, the genuine growth
Of dear *Philander's* dust. He, thus, tho' dead,
May still befriend, — What themes ? *Time's* wond'rous
price,

Death, friendship, and Philander's final scene.

So could I touch these themes, as might obtain
Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite disengag'd,
The good deed would delight me ; half-impress
On my dark cloud an *Iris* ; and from grief,
Call glory. — Dost thou mourn *Philander's* fate ?
I know thou say'st it : says thy life the same ?
He mourns the dead, who lives as they desire.

Where is that thrift, that avarice of TIME,
 (O glorious avarice!) thought of death inspires,
 As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?
 O *time*! than gold more sacred; more a load
 Than lead, to fools; and fools reputed wise.
 What *moment*'s granted man without account?
 What *years* are squander'd, wisdom's debt unpaid?
 Our wealth in days all due to *that* discharge.
 Haste, haste, he lyes in wait, he's at the door,
 Insidious *death*! should his strong hand arrest,
 No composition sets the prisoner free:
Eternity's inexorable chain
 Fast binds; and vengeance claims the full arrears.

How late I shudder'd on the brink? how late
 Life call'd for her last refuge in despair?
 That *time* is mine, O *Mead*! to thee I owe;
 Fain would I pay thee with *eternity*:
 But ill my genius answers my desire,
 My sickly song is mortal, past thy cure.
 Accept the will; it dies not with my strain.

For what calls *thy* disease, *Lorenzo*? not
 For *Escalopian*, but for *moral* aid.
 Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.
 Youth is not rich in *time*; it may be, poor:
 Part with it as with money, sparing; pay
 No moment, but in purchase of its worth:
 And what its worth, ask death-beds, they can tell.
 Part with it as with life, reluctant; big
 With holy hope of nobler time to come:
 Time higher-aim'd, still nearer the great mark
 Of men and angels; virtue more divine.

Is this our *duty*, *wisdom*, *glory*, *gain*?
 (These heaven benign in vital union binds)
 And sport we like the natives of the bough,

When vernal suns inspire ! *Amusement* reigns
 Man's great demand : to trifle is to live :
 And is it then a trifle, too, to die ?
 Thou say'st I *preach* ; *Lorenzo* ! 'tis confess.
 What if, for once, I preach thee quite *awake* ?
 Who wants *amusement* in the flame of battle ?
 Is it not treason, to the soul *immortal*,
 Her foes in arms, eternity the prize ?
 Will toys amuse, when med'cines cannot cure ?
 When spirits ebb, when life's enchanting scenes
 Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,
 (As lands, and cities with their glitt'ring spires,
 To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm
 Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there :)
 Will toys amuse ?——No : thrones will then be toys,
 And earth and skies seem dust upon the scale.

Redeem we time ?——its *loss* we dearly buy.
 What pleads *Lorenzo* for his high-priz'd sports ?
 He pleads time's numerous *blanks* ; he loudly pleads
 The straw-like *trifles*, on life's common stream.
 From whom those *blanks* and *trifles*, but from *thee* ?
 No *blank*, no *trifle* nature made, or meant.
 Virtue, or *purpos'd* virtue still be thine :
This cancels thy complaint at once ; *this* leaves
 In *act* no trifle, and no *blank* in *time* :
This greatens, fills, immortalizes all ;
This, the blest art of turning all to gold ;
This, the good heart's prerogative to raise
 A royal tribute from the poorest hours :
 Immense revenue ! every moment *pay*,
 If nothing more than *purpose* in thy power,
 Thy purpose firm, is equal to the deed :
 Who does the best his circumstance allows,
 Does well, acts nobly ; angels could no more.

Our *outward* act, indeed, admits restraint ;
 'Tis not in things o'er *thought* to domineer : (heaven.
 Guard well thy thoughts ; our thoughts are heard in
 On all-important *time*, through every age,
 Tho' much, and warm, the wise have urg'd ; the man
 Is yet unborn, who duly weighs an hour.
 " *I've lost a day,*"——The prince who nobly cry'd,
 Had been an emperor without his crown ;
 Of *Rome* ! say, rather, lord of human race ;
 He spoke, as if deputed by mankind.
 So should all speak : so *reason* speaks in all.
 From the soft whispers of that God in man,
 Why fly to folly, why to frenzy fly,
 For rescue from the *blessing* we possess ?
Time, the supreme !——time is eternity ;
 Pregnant with all eternity can give ;
 Pregnant with all that makes arch-angels smile :
 Who murders time, he crushes in the birth
 A pow'r ethereal, only *not* ador'd.

Ah ! how unjust to nature, and himself,
 Is thoughtless, thankless, inconsistent man ?
 Like children babbling nonsense in their sports,
 We censure nature for a span too short ;
 That span too short, we tax as tedious too,
 Torture invention, all expedients tire,
 To lash the ling'ring moments into speed,
 And whirl us (happy riddance !) from ourselves.
Art, brainless *art* ! our furious charioteer
 (For *nature's* voice unstifted would recal)
 Drives headlong towards the precipice of death ;
 Death, most our dread ; death *thus* more dreadful made.
 O what a riddle of absurdity ?
Leisure is pain ; takes off our chariot-wheels,
 How heavily we drag the load of life !

Blest leisure is our curse, like that of *Cain*;
 It makes us wander; wander earth around
 To fly that tyrant, Thought. As *Atlas* groan'd
 The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour.
 We cry for mercy to the next amusement;
 The next amusement mortgages our fields;
 Slight inconvenience! prisons hardly frown,
 From hateful *time*, if prisons set us free.
 Yet when *death* kindly tenders us relief,
 We call him cruel; years to moments shrink,
 Ages to years. The telescope is turn'd:
 To man's false optics (from his folly false)
Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
 And seems to creep, decrepit with his age:
 Behold him, when past by; what then is seen
 But his broad pinions swifter than the winds?
 And all mankind, in contradiction strong,
 Rueful, aghast! cry out at his career.

Leave to thy foes these errors, and these ills;
 To nature just, their *cause* and *cure* explore.
 Not short heaven's bounty, boundless our expence;
 No niggard, nature; men are prodigals.
 We *waste*, not *use* our time: we breathe, not live.
 Time *wasted* is existence, *us'd* is life:
 And *bare existence*, man, to *live* ordain'd,
 Wrings, and oppresses with enormous weight.
 And why? since *time* was given for use, not waste,
 Enjoin'd to fly; with tempest, tide, and stars,
 To keep his speed, nor ever wait for man;
Time's use was doom'd a pleasure; waste, a pain;
 That man might *feel* his error, if unseen;
 And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure:
 Not, blundering, split on idleness, for ease.
 Life's cares are comforts; such by Heaven design'd;

28 THE COMPLAINT:

He that has none, must make them, or be wretched.
 Cares are employments; and without employ
 The soul is on a rack; the rack of rest;
 To souls most adverse; action all their joy.

Here, then, the riddle, mark'd above, unfolds;
 Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool.
 We rave, we wrestle with *great nature's plan*;
 We thwart the Deity! and 'tis decreed,
 Who thwart his will, shall contradict their own.
 Hence our unnatural quarrel with ourselves;
 Our thoughts at enmity; our bosom-broil;
 We push time from us, and we wish him back,
 Lavish of lustrums, and yet fond of life;
Life we think long, and short; *death* seek, and shun;
 Body and soul, like peevish man and wife,
 United jar, and yet are loth to part.

Oh the dark days of vanity! while here,
 How tasteless? and how terrible, when gone?
 Gone? they ne'er go; when past, they haunt us still;
 The spirit walks of ev'ry day deceas'd,
 And smiles an angel; or a fury frowns.
 Nor death, nor life delights us. If time *pass*,
 And time *possess*, both pain us, what can please?
 That which the Deity to please ordain'd,
 Time *us'd*. The man who consecrates his hours
 By vigorous effort, and an honest aim,
 At once he draws the sling of life and death:
 He *walks with nature*; and her paths are peace.

Our error's cause, and cure are seen: see next
 Time's *nature, origin, importance, speed*;
 And thy great gain from urging his career.—
 All-sensual man, because untouch'd, unseen,
 He looks on *time*, as nothing. Nothing else
 Is truly man's; 'tis fortune's.—Time's a god.

Thou hast ne'er heard of *time's* omnipotence ;
 For, or against, what wonders can he do ?
 And *will* : to stand blank *neuter* he disdains.
 Not on *those terms* was *time*, (heaven's stranger !) sent
 On his important embassy to man.
 Lorenzo ! no : on the long-destin'd hour,
 From everlasting ages growing ripe,
 That memorable hour of wond'rous birth,
 When the Dread Sire, on emanation bent,
 And big with nature, rising in his might,
 Call'd forth creation, (for then *time* was born)
 By Godhead streaming thro' a thousand worlds,
 Not on *those terms*, from the great days of heaven,
 From old eternity's mysterious orb,
 Was *time* cut off, and cast beneath the skies ;
 The skies, which watch him in his new abode,
 Measuring his motions by revolving spheres ;
 That horologe machinery divine.
 Hours, days, and months, and years, his children, play,
 Like numerous wings, around him, as he flies :
 Or, rather, as unequal plumes, they shape
 His ample pinions, swift as darted flame,
 To gain his goal, to reach his ancient rest,
 And join anew *eternity*, his sire ;
 In his *immutability* to nest,
 When worlds, that count his circles *now*, unhing'd,
 (Fate the loud signal sounding) headlong rush
 To *timeless* night, and chaos, whence they rose.
 Why spur the speedy ? why with levities
 New-wing thy short, short day's too rapid flight ?
 Know'st thou, or what thou dost, or what is done ?
 Man flies from *time*, and *time* from man : too soon
 In sad divorce, this double flight must end ;
 And then, where are we ? where, Lorenzo ! then,

30 THE COMPLAINT:

Thy sports? thy pomps?-----I grant thee, in a state
Not unambitious; in the *ruffled* shroud,
Thy *Parian* tomb's *triumphant arch* beneath.
Has *death* his sopperies? then well may *life*
Put on her plume, and in her rainbow shine.

Ye well array'd! ye lilies of our land!
Ye lilies *male*! who neither toil, nor spin,
(As *sister lilies might*) if not so wise
As *Salomon*, more sumptuous to the sight!
Ye delicate! who nothing can support,
Your selves most insupportable! for whom
The winter rose must blow, the sun put on
A brighter beam in *Leo*; filky-soft
Favonius, breathe still softer, or be chid;
And other worlds send odours, fance, and song,
And robes, and notions, fram'd in foreign looms!
O ye *Lorenzos* of our age! who deem
One moment unamus'd, a misery
Not made for feeble man! who call aloud
For every bawble, driv'd o'er by sense;
For rattles, and conceits of every cast,
For change of follies, and relays of joy,
To drag your patient, through the tedious length
Of a short winter's *day*;---say, fages! say,
Wit's oracles! say, dreamers of gay dreams!
How will you weather an *eternal night*,
Where such expedients fail?

O treach'rous *conscience*! while she seems to sleep,
On *rose* and *myrtle*, lull'd with syren song;
While she seems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop,
On headlong *appetite* the slacken'd rein,
And give us up to *licence*, unrecall'd,
Unmarkt;---see, from behind her secret stand,
The sly informer minutes every fault.

And her dread diary with horror fills :
 Not the gross *act* alone employs her pen ;
 She reconnoitres *fancy's* airy band,
 A watchful foe ! The formidable spy,
 List'ning, o'erhears the whispers of our camp ;
 Our dawning purposes of heart explores,
 And steals our embryos of iniquity.
 As all rapacious usurers conceal
 Their doomsday-book, from all-consuming heirs ;
 Thus, with indulgence most severe, she treats
 Us, spendthrifts of inestimable *time* ;
 Unnoted, notes each moment misapply'd ;
 In leaves more durable than leaves of brass,
 Writes our whole history ; which death shall read
 In every pale delinquent's private ear ;
 And *judgment* publish : publish to more worlds
 Than this ; and endless age in groans resound.
 Lorenzo, such that *sleep* in thy breast !
 Such is her slumber ; and her vengeance *such*,
 For slighted counsel ; *such* thy future peace !
 And think'st thou still thou canst be wise too soon ?

But why on *time* so lavish is my song ?
 On this great theme kind *nature* keeps a school,
 To teach her sons herself. Each night we dye,
 Each morn are born anew ; each day, a life !
 And shall we kill each day ? if *trifling* kills ;
 Sure *vice* must butcher. O what heaps of slain
 Cry out for vengeance on us ! *time* destroy'd
 Is *suicide*, where more than blood is spilt.
 Time flies, death urges, knells call, heaven invites,
 Hell threatens ; all exerts ; in effort, all ;
 More than creation, labours ! — labours more ?
 And is there in creation, what, amidst
 This tumult universal, wing'd dispatch,

And ardent energy, supinely yawns?—
Man sleeps; and *man* alone; and *man*, whose fate,
 Fate irreverfible, entire, extreme,
 Endlefs, hair-hung, breeze-shaken, o'er the gulph
 A moment trembles; drops! and *man*, for whom
 All elfe is in alarm; *man*, the fole caufe
 Of this furrounding ftorm! and yet he fleeps,
 As the ftorm rock'd to reft.—Throw years away?
 Throw empires, and be blamelefs. Moments feize,
 Heaven's on their wing: a moment we may wifh,
 When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid *day* ftand ftill,
 Bid him drive back his carr, recall, retake
 Fate's hafty prey: implore him, reimport
 The period paff, regive the given hour.
Lorenzo, more than miracles we want;
Lorenzo—O for yefterdays to come!

Such is the language of the man awake;
 His ardor fuch, for what oppreffes thee.
 And is his ardor vain, *Lorenzo*? No;
 That more than miracles indulge;
 To-day is yefterday return'd; return'd
 Full-power'd to cancel, expiate, raife, adorn,
 And reinftate us on the rock of peace.
 Let it not fhare its predeceffor's fate;
 Nor, like its elder fifters, die a fool.
 Shall it evaporate in fume? fly off
 Fuliginous, and ftain us deeper ftill?
 Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd?
 More wretched for the clemencies of heav'n?

Where fhall I find him? angels! tell me where?
 You know him; he is near you: point him out:
 Shall I fee glories beaming from his brow?
 Or trace his footfteps by the raifing flow'rs?
 Your golden wings, now hov'ring o'er him, fhed

Protection ; now, are waving in applause
 To that blest son of foresight ! lord of fate !
 That awful independent on *to-morrow* !
 Whose *work is done* ; who triumphs in the *past* ;
 Whose *yesterdays* look backwards with a smile ;
 Nor, like the *Parthian* ; wound him as they fly ;
 That common, but opprobrious lot ! past hours,
 If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,
 If folly bounds our prospect by the grave,
 All feeling of futurity benumb'd ;
 All God-like passion for eternals quench'd ;
 All relish of realities expir'd ;
 Renounc'd all correspondence with the skies ;
 Our freedom chain'd ; quite winglefs our desire,
 In sense dark-prison'd all that ought to soar,
 Prone to the center, crawling in the dust,
 Dismounted every great and glorious aim ;
 Embruted every faculty divine ;
 Heart-buried in the rubbish of the world,
 The world, that gulph of souls, immortal souls,
 Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire
 To reach the distant skies, and triumph there
 On thrones, which shall not mourn their masters chang'd ;
 Tho' we from *earth* ; *etherial*, they that fell.
 Such veneration due, O man, to man,

Who venerate themselves, the world despise.
 For what, gay friend ! is this *escutcheon'd* world,
 Which hangs out DEATH in one eternal night ?
 A night, that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,
 And wraps our thought, at banquets, in the shroud.
 Life's little stage is a small eminence,
 Inch-high the grave above ; that home of man,
 Where dwells the multitude : we gaze around,
 We read their monuments ; we sigh ; and while

We sigh, we sink ; and *are* what we deplor'd ;
Lamenting, or lamented, all our lot !

Is death at distance ? No : he has been on thee ;
And given sure earnest of his final blow.

Those hours, which lately smil'd, where are they now ?

Pallid to thought, and ghastly ! drown'd, all drown'd

In that great deep, which nothing disembogues ;

And, dying, they bequeath'd thee small renown.

The rest are on the wing ; how fleet their flight ?

Already has the fatal train took fire ;

A moment, and the world's blown up to thee ;

The sun is darkness, and the stars are dust.

'Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours ;

And ask them, what report they bore to heaven ;

And how they might have borne more welcome news.

Their answers form what men *experience* call ;

If *wisdom's* friend, her best ; if not, worst foe.

O reconcile them ; kind *experience* cries,

“ There's nothing here, but what as nothing weighs ;

“ The more our joy, the more we know it vain ;

“ And by success are tutor'd to despair.

Nor *is* it only thus, but *must* be so.

Who knows not this, tho' grey, is still a child.

Loose then from earth the grasp of fond desire,

Weigh anchor, and some happier clime explore.

Art thou so moor'd thou canst not disengage,

Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future scenes ?

Since, by *life's* passing breath, blown up from earth,

Light, as the summer's dust, we take in air

A moment's giddy flight, and fall again ;

Join the dull mass, increase the trodden soil,

And sleep till earth herself shall be no more ;

Since *then* (as emmets, their small world o'erthrown)

We, fore amaz'd, from out earth's ruins crawl,

And rise to fate extreme of foul or fair,
 As man's own choice, (controuler of the skies !)
 As man's despotic will, perhaps *one* hour,
 (O how omnipotent is time !) decrees ;
 Should not each *warning* give a strong alarm ?
 Warning, far less than that of bosom torn
 From bosom, bleeding o'er the sacred dead !
 Should not each *dial* strike us as we pass,
 Portentous, as the *written wall*, which struck,
 O'er midnight bowls, the proud *Affyrian* pale,
 Ere-while high-flusht with insolence and wine ?
 Like *that*, the dial speaks ; and points to thee,
Lorenzo ! loth to break the banquet up.

“ O man, thy kingdom is departing from thee ;

“ And, while it lasts, is emptier than my shade.”

Its silent language such : nor need'st thou call

Thy *Magi*, to decypher what it means.

Know, like the *Median*, fate is in thy walls :

Dost ask, *how* ? *whence* ? *Belshazzar*-like, amaz'd ?

Man's make incloses the sure seeds of death ;

Life feeds the murderer : ingrate ! he thrives

On her own meal, and then his nurse devours.

But, here, *Lorenzo*, the delusion lies ;

That *solar shadow*, as it measures life,

It life resembles too : life speeds away

From point to point, tho' seeming to stand still.

The cunning fugitive is swift by stealth :

Too subtle is the movement to be seen :

Yet soon man's hour is up, and we are gone.

Warnings point out our danger ; *gnomons*, time :

As *these* are useless when the sun is set ;

So *those*, but when more glorious *reason* shines.

Reason should judge in all ; in reason's eye,

That sedentary shadow travels hard.

But such our gravitation to the wrong,
 So prone our hearts to whisper what we wish,
 'Tis later with the wife, than he's aware ;
 A *Wilmington* goes slower than the sun ;
 And all mankind mistake their time of day ;
 Ev'n age itself. Fresh hopes are hourly sown
 In furrow'd brows. So gentle life's descent,
 We shut our eyes, and think it is a plain.
 We take fair days in winter, for the spring ;
 And turn our blessings into bane. Since oft
 Man must *compute* that age he cannot *feel*,
 He scarce believes he's older for his years.
 Thus, at life's latest eve, we kept in store
 One disappointment sure, to crown the rest ;
 The disappointment of a promis'd hour.

On *this*, or similar, *Philander* ! thou
 Whose mind was moral, as the preacher's tongue ;
 And strong, to wield all science, worth the name ;
 How often we talk'd down the summer's sun,
 And cool'd our passions by the breezy stream !
 How often thaw'd, and shorten'd winter's eve,
 By conflict kind, that struck out latent truth,
 Best found, so sought ; to the *recluse* more coy !
 Thoughts disentangle passing o'er the lip ;
 Clean runs the thread ; if not, 'tis thrown away,
 Or kept to tie up nonsense for a song ;
 Song, fashionably fruitless ! such as stains
 The *fancy*, and unhallow'd *passion* fires ;
 Chiming her saints to *Cytherea's* fane.

Know'st thou, *Lorenzo* ! what a friend contains ?
 As bees mixt *Nectar* draw from fragrant flow'rs,
 So men from FRIENDSHIP, *wisdom* and *delight* ;
 Twins ty'd by nature, if they part, they die.
 Hast thou no friend to set thy mind abroad ?

Good sense will stagnate. Thoughts shut up, want air,
And spoil, like bales unopen'd to the sun.
Had thought been all, sweet speech had been deny'd;
Speech, thought's canal! speech, thought's criterion too!
Thought in the mine, may come forth gold or dross;
When coin'd in word, we know its *real* worth.

If sterling, store it for thy future use;

'Twill buy thee benefit; perhaps, renown.

Thought, too, deliver'd, is the more possess'd;

Teaching, we learn; and, giving, we retain

The births of intellect; when dumb, forgot.

Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;

Speech burnishes our mental magazine;

Brightens for ornament; and whets, for use.

What numbers, sheath'd in erudition, lie,

Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,

And rusted in; who might have born an edge,

And play'd a sprightly beam, if born to *speech*;

If born blest heirs of half their mother's tongue?

'Tis thoughts exchange, which like th' alternate push

Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned scum,

And defecates the student's standing pool.

In *contemplation* is his proud resource?

'Tis poor, as proud, by *converse* unsustain'd.

Rude thought runs wild in *contemplation's* field;

Converse, the menage, breaks it to the bit

Of due restraint; and *emulation's* spur

Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.

'Tis *converse* qualifies for solitude;

As exercise, for salutary rest.

By that untutor'd, *contemplation* raves

A lunar prince, or famish'd beggar dies;

And *nature's* fool, by *wisdom's* is outdone.

Wisdom, tho' richer than *Peruvian* mines,

And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,
 What is she, but the means of *happiness*?
 That unobtain'd, than folly more a fool;
 A melancholy fool, without her bells.
Friendship the means, and friendship richly gives
 The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise.
Nature, in zeal for human amity,
 Denies, or damps an *undivided* joy.
 Joy is an import; joy is an exchange;
 Joy flies monopolists: it calls for *two*;
 Rich fruit! heav'n-planted! never pluckt by *one*,
 Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give
 To *social* man true relish of himself.
 Full on ourselves descending in a line
Pleasure's bright beam, is feeble in delight:
 Delight intense, is taken by rebound;
 Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.

Celestial *happiness*, whene'er she stoops
 To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,
 And one alone, to make her sweet amends
 For absent heav'n—the bosom of a friend;
 Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,
 Each other's pillow to repose divine.
 Beware the counterfeit: In *passion's* flame
 Hearts melt; but melt like ice, soon harder froze.
 True love strikes root in *reason*; *passion's* foe:
Virtue alone entenders us for life:
 I wrong her much—entenders us for ever.
 Of *friendship's* fairest fruits, the fruit most fair
 Is *virtue* kindling at a rival fire,
 And, *emulously*, rapid in her race.
 O the soft enmity! endearing strife!
 This carries friendship to her noon-tide point,
 And gives the river of eternity.

From *friendship*, which outlives my former themes,
Glorious survivor of old *time*, and *death*!
From friendship, thus, that flow'r of heavenly seed,
The wise extract earth's most *Hyblean* bliss,
Superior wisdom, crown'd with smiling joy;
For joy, from friendship born, abounds in smiles.
O store it in the soul's most golden cell!

But for whom blossoms this *Elysian* flower!

Abroad they find, who cherish it, at *home*.

Lorenzo! pardon what my love extorts,

An honest love, and not afraid to frown.

Tho' choice of follies fasten on the *great*,

None clings more obstinate, than fancy fond,

That sacred friendship is their easy prey;

Caught by the wafture of a golden lure;

Or fascination of a high-born smile.

Their smiles, the *great*, and the *cocquet*, throw out

For others hearts, tenacious of their own;

And we no less of ours, when *such* the bait.

Ye fortune's cofferers! ye powers of wealth

You do your *rent-rolls* most felonious wrong,

By taking our attachment to *yourselves*.

Can gold gain friendship? impudence of hope!

As well mere man an angel might beget.

Love, and love only, is the loan for love.

Lorenzo! pride repress; nor hope to find

A friend, but what has found a friend in thee.

All like the purchase; few the price will pay;

And this makes friends such miracles below.

What if (since daring on so nice a theme)

I shew thee friendship delicate, as dear,

Of tender violations apt to die?

Reserve will wound it; and *distrust*, destroy.

Deliberate on all things with thy friend:

But since friends grow not thick on ev'ry bough,
 Nor ev'ry friend unrotten at the core;
 First, on thy friend, delib'rate with thyself;
 Pause, ponder, sift; not eager in the choice,
 Nor jealous of the chosen; fixing, fix;
 Judge before friendship, then confide till death.
 Well, for thy friend; but nobler far for thee;
 How gallant danger for earth's highest prize?
 A friend is worth all hazard we can run.

"Poor is the friendless master of a world:

"A world in purchase for a friend is gain."

So sung he (angel hear that angels sing!
 Angels from friendship gather half their joy)
 So sung *Philander*, as his friend went round
 In the rich *Ichor*, in the generous blood
 Of *Bacchus*, purple God of joyous wit,
 A brow solute, and ever-laughing eye.
 He drank long health, and virtue to his friend;
 His friend, who warm'd him more, who more inspir'd.
Friendship's the wine of life; but friendship *new*
 (Not such was his) is neither strong, nor pure.
 O! for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,
 And elevating spirit, of a friend,
 For twenty summers ripening by my side;
 All feculence of falshood long thrown down;
 All social virtues rising in his soul;
 As crystal clear; and smiling, as they rise!
Here nectar flows; it sparkles in our sight;
 Rich to the taste, and genuine from the heart.
 High-flavour'd bliss for gods! on earth how rare!
 On earth how *lost*! *Philander* is no more.
 Think'st thou the theme intoxicates my song?
 Am I too warm? too warm I cannot be:
 I lov'd him much; but now I love him more.

Like birds, whose beauties languish, half conceal'd,
 Till mounted on the wing, their glossy plumes
 Expanded shine with azure, green, and gold;
 How blessings brighten as they take their flight!
 His flight *Philander* took; his upward flight,
 If ever soul ascended. Had he dropt,
 (That eagle genius!) O had he let fall
 One feather as he flew; I, then, had wrote,
 What friends might flatter; prudent foes forbear;
 Rivals scarce damn; and *Zoilus* reprieve.
 Yet what I can I must: it were profane
 To quench a glory lighted at the skies,
 And cast in shadows his illustrious close.
 Strange! the theme most affecting, most sublime,
 Momentous most to man, shou'd sleep unsung!
 And yet it sleeps, by genius unawak'd,
Painim or *Christian*; to the blush of wit.
 Man's highest triumph! man's profoundest fall!
 The *Death-bed* of the just! is yet undrawn
 By mortal hand: it merits a divine:
 Angels should paint it, angels ever *there*;
 There, on a post of honour, and of joy.
 Dare I presume, then? but *Philander* bids:
 And glory tempts, and inclination calls——
 Yet I am struck; as struck the soul, beneath
 Aerial *groves* impenetrable gloom;
 Or, in some might y *ruin's* solemn strade;
 Or, gazing by pale lamps on *high-born dust*,
 In vaults; thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings;
 Or, at the midnight *altar's* hallow'd flame.
 It is religion to proceed: I pause——
 And; enter, aw'd the temple of my theme:
 Is it his death-bed! No, it is his shrine;
 Behold him; there, just rising to a god:

The chamber where the good man meets his fate,
 Is privileg'd beyond the common walk
 Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heaven,
 Fly, ye profane ! if not, draw near with awe,
 Receive the blessing, and adore the chance,
 That threw in this *Bethesda* your disease ;
 If unrestor'd by this, despair your cure.
 For, *here*, restless demonstration dwells ;
 A death-bed's a detector of the heart.
Here tir'd dissimulation drops her masque,
 Thro' life's grimace, that mistress of the scene !
Here real, and apparent, are the same.
 You see the *man* ; you see his hold on heav'n ;
 If sound his virtue ; as *Philander*'s sound.
 Heav'n waits not the last moment, owns her friends
 On this side death ; and points them out to men,
 A lecture, silent, but of sovereign pow'r !
 To vice, confusion ; and to virtue, peace.

Whatever farce the boastful hero plays,
Virtue alone has majesty in death ;
 And greater still, the more the tyrant frowns.
Philander ! he severely frown'd on thee.

" No warning given ! unceremonious fate !
 " A sudden rush from life's meridian joys !
 " A wrench from all we *love* ! from all we *are* !
 " A restless bed of pain ! a plunge opaque
 " Beyond conjecture ! feeble *nature*'s dread !
 " Strong *reason*'s shudder at the dark unknown !
 " A fun' extinguish'd ! a just opening grave !
 " And oh ! the last, last ; what ? (can words express ?
 " Thought reach ?) the last, last--*silence* of a friend !"
 Where are those horrors, that amazement, where,
 This hideous group of ills, which singly shock,
 Demand from man ?——I thought him man till now.

Thro' nature's wreck, thro' vanquish'd agonies,
 (Like the stars struggling thro' this midnight gloom)
 What gleams of joy! what more than human peace?
 Where, the frail mortal? the poor abject worm?
 No, not in death, the mortal to be found.
 His conduct is a legacy for all.
 Richer than *Mammon's* for his single heir.
 His comforters be comforts; great in ruin,
 With unreluctant grandeur, gives, not yields.
 His soul sublime; and closes with his fate.

How our hearts burnt within us at the scene!
 Whence, this brave bound o'er limits fixt to man?
 His God sustains him in his final hour!
 His final hour brings glory to his God!
 Man's glory heav'n vouchsafes to call her own.
 We gaze; we weep; mixt tears of grief and joy!
 Amazement strikes! Devotion bursts to flame!
Christians adore! and *Infidels* believe.

As some tall tow'r, or lofty mountain's brow,
 Detains the sun, illustrious from its height;
 While rising vapours, and descending shades,
 With damps, and darkness, drown the spacious vale:
 Undamp't by doubt, undarken'd by despair,
Philander, thus, augustly rears his head,
 At that black hour, which gen'ral horror sheds
 On the low level of th' inglorious throng:
 Sweet peace, and heavenly hope, and humble joy,
 Divinely beam on his exalted soul;
 Destruction gild, and crown him for the skies,
 With incommunicable lustre, bright.

END OF THE SECOND NIGHT.

NIGHT THE THIRD.

N A R C I S S A.

Humbly Inscrib'd to her GRACE

The DUTCHESS of P—.

Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere Manes.

VIRG.

THE THIRD

W A R C I S A

THE DUTCH

THE DUTCH

THE DUTCH

THE
COMPLAINT.

NIGHT THE THIRD.

FROM *dreams*, where thought in fancy's maze runs
mad,

To *reason*, that heav'n-lighted lamp in man,

Once more I wake ; and at the destin'd hour,

Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,

I keep my assignation with my woe.

O ! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,

Lost to the noble fallies of the soul !

Who think it solitude, to be alone.

Communion sweet ! communion large and high !

Our *Reason*, guardian angel, and our god !

Then nearest these, when others most remote ;

And all, ere long, shall be remote, *but* these.

How dreadful, *then*, to meet them all alone,

A stranger ! unacknowledg'd ! unapprov'd !

Now woo them ; wed them ; bind them to thy breast :

To win thy wish, creation has no more.

Or if we wish a *fourth*, it is a friend —

But friends, how mortal ! dang'rous the desire.

Take *Phoebus* to yourselves, ye basking bards !

Inebriate at fair fortune's fountain-head,

And reeling thro' the wilderness of joy ;

Where *sense* runs savage, broke from *reason's* chain,

And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.

My fortune is unlike ; unlike my song ;

Unlike the deity my song invokes.

I to day's soft-ey'd sister pay my court,
 (*Endymion's* rival!) and her aid implore;
 Now first implor'd in succour to the *musè*.

Thou, who didst lately borrow **Cynthia's* form,
 And modestly forego thine own! O thou,
 Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire!
 Say, why not *Cynthia*, patroness of song?
 As thou her crescent, she thy character
 Assumes; still more a goddess by the change.

Are there demurring wits, who dare dispute
 This revolution in the world inspir'd?
 Ye train *Pierian*! to the *lunar* sphere,
 In silent hour, address your ardent call
 For aid immortal; less her brother's right.
 She, with the spheres harmonious, nightly leads
 The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain,
 A strain for gods! deny'd to mortal ear.
 Transmit it heard, thou silver-queen of heaven!
 What title, or what name endears thee most?
Cynthia! *Cyllene*! *Phoebe*!—or dost hear
 With higher gust, fair *P——d* of the skies?
 Is that the soft enchantment calls thee down,
 More pow'rful than of old *Circean* charm?
 Come; but from heav'nly banquets with thee bring
 The soul of song; and whisper in mine ear
 The theft divine; or in propitious dreams
 (For dreams are thine) transfuse it thro' the breast
 Of thy first votary-----but not thy last;
 If, like thy *name-sake*, thou art ever kind.

And kind thou wilt be; kind on such a theme;
 A theme so like thee, a quite *lunar* theme,
 Soft, mdest, melancholy, female, fair?
 A theme that rose all-pale, and told my soul,

* At the duke of *Norfolk's* masquerade.

'Twas night ; on her fond hopes perpetual night ;
 A night which struck a damp, a deadlier damp,
 Than that which smote me from *Philander's* tomb.
Narcissa follows, ere his tomb is clos'd.
 Woe's cluster ; rare are *solitary* woes ;
 They love a train, they tread each other's heel ;
 Her death invades his mournful right, and claims
 The grief that started from my lids for him :
 Seizes the faithless, alienated tear,
 Or shares it, ere it falls. So frequent death,
 Sorrow, he *more* than causes, he confounds ;
 For human sighs his rival strokes contend,
 And make distress, distraction. Oh *Philander* !
 What was thy fate ? a double fate to me ;
 Portent, and pain ! a menace, and a blow !
 Like the black raven hov'ring o'er my peace,
 Not less a bird of omen, than of prey.
 It call'd *Narcissa* long before her hour ;
 It call'd her tender soul, by break of bliss,
 From the first blossom, from the buds of joy ;
 Those few our noxious fate unblasted leaves
 In this inclement clime of human life.

Sweet harmonist ! and beautiful as sweet !
 And young as beautiful ! and soft as young !
 And gay as soft ! and innocent as gay !
 And happy (if ought happy *here*) as good !
 For fortune fond had built her nest on high.
 Like birds quite exquisite of note and plume,
 Transfixt by *fate* (who loves a lofty mark)
 How from the summit of the grove she fell,
 And left it unharmonious ! all its charm
 Extinguist in the wonders of her song !
 Her song still vibrates in my ravish'd ear,
 Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain

50 THE COMPLAINT:

(O to forget her!) thrilling thro' my heart!

Song, beauty, youth, love, virtue, joy; this group
Of bright ideas, flow'rs of Paradise,

As yet unforfeit! in one blaze we bind,

Kneel, and present it to the skies; as all

We guests of heav'n: and these were all her own;

And she was mine; and I was---*was* most blest,---

Gay title of the deepest misery!

As bodies grow more pond'rous, robb'd of life;

Good lost weighs more in grief, than gain'd, in joy.

Like blossom'd trees o'erturn'd by vernal storm,

Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay;

And if in death still lovely, lovelier there;

Far lovelier! pity swells the tide of love.

And will not the severe excuse a sigh?

Scorn the proud man that is ashamed to weep;

Our tears *indulg'd* indeed deserve our shame.

Ye that e'er lost an angel! pity me.

Soon as the lustre languisht in her eye,

Dawning a dimmer day on human sight;

And on her cheek, the residence of spring,

Pale omen sat; and scatter'd fears around

On all that saw (and who would cease to gaze,

'That once had seen?) with haste, parental haste,

I flew, I snatch'd her from the rigid north,

Her native bed, on which bleak *Boreas* blew,

And bore her nearer to the sun; the sun

(As if the sun could envy) checkt his beam,

Deny'd his wonted succour, nor with more

Regret beheld her drooping, than the bells

Of lilies; fairest lilies not so fair.

Queen lilies! and ye painted populace!

Who dwell in fields, and lead ambrosial lives;

In morn and ev'ning dew your beauties bathe,

And drink the sun ; which gives your cheeks to glow,
 And outblush (*mine* excepted) ev'ry fair ;
 You gladlier grow, ambitious of her han !,
 Which often cropt your odours, incense meet
 To thought so pure ; her flow'ry state of mind
 In joy unfall'n. Ye lovely fugitives !
 Coaeval race with man ! for man you smile ;
 Why not smile *at* him too ? you share indeed
 His sudden pass ; but not his constant pain.

So man is made, no ight ministers delight,
 But what his glowing passions can engage ;
 And glowing passions, bent on aught below,
 Must, soon or late, with anguish turn the scale ;
 And anguish, after rapture, how severe !
 Rapture ? bold man ! who tempts the wrath divine,
 By plucking fruit deny'd to mortal taste,
 While *here*, presuming on the rights of heaven.
 For transport dost thou call on ev'ry hour,
Lorenzo ? At thy friend's expence be wise ;
 Lean not on earth ; 'twill pierce thee to the heart ;
 A broken reed, at best ; but, oft, a spear ;
 On its sharp point peace bleeds, and hope expires.

Turn, hopeless thought ! turn from her :---thought
 Resenting rallies, and wakes ev'ry woe. (repell'd,
 Snatch'd ere thy prime ! and in thy bridal hour !
 And when kind fortune, with thy lover smil'd !
 And when high-flavour'd thy fresh-op'ning joys !
 And when blind man pronounc'd thy bliss complete !
 And on a foreign shore ; where strangers wept !
 Strangers to thee, and, more surprising still,
 Strangers to kindness, wept : their eyes let fall
 Inhuman tears ; strange tears ; that trickled down
 From marble hearts ! obdurate tenderness !
 A tenderness that call'd them more severe ;

In spite of nature's soft persuasion, steel'd;
 While *nature* melted, *superstition* rav'd;
 That mourn'd the dead; and *this* deny'd a grave.

Their sighs incens't; sighs foreign to the will!
 Their will the *tyger* suckt, outrag'd the storm.
 For, Oh! the curst ungodliness of zeal!
 While *sinful flesh* relented, *spirit* murk
 In blind *infallibility's* embrace,
 The *sainted spirit* petrify'd the breast;
 Deny'd the charity of dust, to spread
 O'er dust! a charity their dogs enjoy.
 What could I do? what succour? what resource?
 With pious sacrilege, a grave I stole;
 With impious piety, that grave I wrong'd;
 Short in my duty; coward in my grief!
 More like her murderer, than friend, I crept,
 With soft-suspended step; and muffled deep
 In midnight darkness, *whisper'd* my last sigh.
 I whisper'd what should echo thro' their realms;
 Nor writ her name, whose tomb shou'd pierce the skies.
 Presumptuous fear! how durst I dread her foes,
 While nature's loudest dictates I obey'd?
 Pardon necessity, blest shade! of grief
 And indignation rival bursts I pour'd;
 Half-execration mingled with my prayer;
 Kindled at man, while I his God ador'd;
 Sore-grudg'd the savage land her sacred dust;
 Stamp't the curst soil; and with humanity
 (Deny'd *Narcissa*) wish't them all a grave.

Glow's my repentment into guilt! what guilt
 Can equal violations of the dead?
 The dead how sacred! sacred is the dust
 Of this heav'n-labour'd form, erect, divine!
 This heav'n-*assum'd* majestic robe of earth,

He deign'd to wear, who hung the vast expanse
 With azure bright, and cloth'd the sun in gold.
 When ev'ry passion sleeps that can offend ;
 When strikes us ev'ry motive that can melt ;
 When man can reek his rancour uncontrol'd,
 That strongest curb on insult and ill-will ;
 Then, spleen to *dust* ? the dust of innocence ?
 An angel's dust !-----This *Lucifer* transcends ;
 When he contended for the patriarch's bones,
 'Twas not the strife of malice, but of pride ;
 The strife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.

Far less than this is shocking in a race
 Most wretched, but from streams of mutual love ;
 And uncreated but for love divine :
 And but for love divine, this moment, lost,
 By fate resorb'd, and sunk in endless night.
 Man hard of heart to man ! of horrid things
 Most horrid ! mid stupend'ous, highly strange !
 Yet oft his courtesies are smother wrongs ;
 Pride brandishes the favours he confers,
 And contumelious his humanity :
 What then his vengeance ? hear it not, ye stars !
 And thou, pale moon ! turn paler at the sound ;
 Man is to man the forest, surest ill.

A previous blast foretells the rising storm ;
 O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall ;
 Volcano's bellow ere they disembody ;
 Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour ;
 And smoke betrays the wide-consuming fire :
 Ruin from man is most conceal'd when near,
 And sends the dreadful tidings in the blow.
 Is this the flight of fancy ? would it were !
 Heav'n's sov'reign saves all beings but himself,
 That hideous sight, a naked human heart.

54 THE COMPLAINT:

Fir'd is the muse? and let the muse be fir'd:
 Who not inflam'd, when what he speaks, he feels,
 And in the nerve most tender, in his friends?
 Shame to mankind! *Philander* had his foes;
 He felt the truth I sing, and I in him.
 But he, nor I, feel more; past ills, *Narcissa*!
 Are sunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart!
 Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs;
 Pangs num'rous, as the num'rous ills that swarm'd
 O'er thy distinguish'd fate, and, clust'ring there
 Thick as the locust on the land of *Nile*,
 Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.
 Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale)
 How was each circumstance with aspics arm'd?
 An aspic, each; and all, an *Hydra*-woe.
 What strong *Herculean* virtue could suffice?—
 Or is it, virtue to be conquer'd here?
 This hoary cheek a train of tears bedews;
 And each tear mourns its own distinct distress;
 And each distress, distinctly mourn'd, demands
 Of grief still more, as heighten'd by the whole.
 A grief like *this* proprietors excludes:
 Not friends alone such obsequies deplore;
 They make mankind the mourner; carry sighs
 Far as the fatal *same* can wing her way,
 And turn the gayest thought of gayest age,
 Down their right channel, thro' the vale of death.
 The vale of death! that hush'd *Cimmerian* vale,
 Where *darkness*, brooding o'er unfinished fates,
 With raven wing incumbent, waits the day.
 (Dread day!) that interdicts all future change.
 That subterranean world, that land of ruin!
 Fit walk, *Lorenzo*, for proud human thought!
 There let my thought expatiate; and explore

Balsamic truths, and healing sentiments,
Of most wanted, and most welcome, *here*.
For gay *Lorenzo's* sake, and for thy own,
My soul ! " The fruits of dying friends survey ;
" Expose the *vain* of life ; weigh life and death ;
" Give death his eulogy ; thy fear subdu'd ;
" And labour that first palm of noble minds,
" A manly scorn of terror from the tomb."

This harvest reap from thy *Narcissa's* grave.
As poets feign'd from *Ajax's* streaming blood
Arose, with grief inscrib'd, a mournful flow'r ;
Let wisdom blossom from my mortal wound,
And *first*, of dying friends ; what fruit from these ?
It brings us more than triple aid ; an aid
To chase our *thoughtfulness*, *fear*, *pride*, and *guilt*.

Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,
To damp our brainless ardors ; and abate
That glare of life, which often blinds the wise.
Our dying friends are pioneers, to smoothe
Our rugged pass to death ; to break those bars
Of terror, and abhorrence, nature throws
Cross our obstructed way ; and, thus, to make
Welcome, as safe, our port from ev'ry storm.
Each friend by fate snatch'd from us, is a plume
Pluckt from the wing of human vanity,
Which makes us stoop from our aerial heights,
And, damp't with omen of our own decease,
On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,
Just skim earth's surface, ere we break it up,
Our putrid pride to scratch a little dust,
And save the world a nuisance. Smitten friends
Are angels sent on errands full of love ;
For us they languish, and for us they die :
And shall they languish, shall they die in vain ?

Ungrateful, shall we grieve their hov'ring shades,
Which wait the revolution in our hearts?
Shall we disdain their silent, soft address;
Their posthumous advice, and pious prayer?
Senseless, as herds that graze their hallow'd graves,
Tread under foot their agonies and groans;
Frustrate their anguish, and destroy their deaths?

Lorenzo! no; the thought of death indulge;
Give it its wholesome empire; let it reign,
That kind chastiser of the soul to joy!
Its reign will spread thy glorious conquests far,
And still the tumults of thy ruffled breast:
Auspicious Æra! golden days, begin!
The thought of death, shall, like a god, inspire.
And why not think on death? is life the theme
Of ev'ry thought? and wish of ev'ry hour?
And song of ev'ry joy? surprising truth!
The beaten spaniel's fondness not so strange.
To wave the num'rous *ills* that seize on life
As their own property, their lawful prey;
Ere man has measur'd half his weary stage,
His luxuries have left him no reserve,
No maiden relishes, unbrought delights;
On cold-serv'd repetitions he subsists,
And in the tasteless *present* chews the *past*;
Disgusted chews, and scarce can swallow down.
Like lavish ancestors, his earlier years
Have disinherited his future hours,
Which starve on orts, and glean their former field.

Live ever here, *Lorenzo!*—Shocking thought!
So shocking, they who wish, disown it too!
Disown from shame, what they from folly crave.
Live ever in the womb, nor see the light?
For what live ever here?—With labouring step

To tread our former footsteps ? pace the round
 Eternal ? to climb daily life's worn wheel,
 Which draws up nothing new ? to beat, and beat,
 The beaten track ? to bid each wretched day
 The former mock ? to surfeit on the *same*,
 And yawn our joys ? or thank a misery
 For change, tho' sad ? to see what we have seen ?
 Hear, till unheard, the same old flabber'd tale ?
 To taste the tasted, and at each return
 Less tasteful ? O'er our palates to decant
 Another vintage ? strain a flatter year,
 Thro' loaded vessels, and a laxer tone ?
 Crazy machines to grind earth's wasted fruits !
 Ill-ground, and worse concocted ! load, not life !
 The *rational* foul kennels of excess !
 Still streaming thorough-fairs of dull debauch !
 Trembling each gulph, lest death should snatch the bowl.

Such of our fine ones is the wish refin'd !
 So would they have it : elegant desire !
 Why not to invite the bellowing stalls, and wilds ?
 But such examples might their riot awe.
 Through want of virtue, that is, want of thought,
 (Tho' on bright thought they father all their flights)
 To what are they reduc'd ? to love, and hate,
 The same vain world ; to censure and espouse,
 This painted shrew of life, who calls them fool
 Each moment of each day ; to flatter bad
 Thro' dread of worse ; to cling to this rude rock,
 Barren, *to them*, of good, and sharp with ills,
 And hourly blacken'd with impending storms,
 And infamous for wrecks of human hope——
 Scar'd at the gloomy gulph, that yawns beneath.
 Such are their triumphs ! such their pangs of joy !
 'Tis time, high time, to shift this dismal scene.

This hugg'd, this hideous state, what art can cure?
One only; but that one, what all may reach;

Virtue—She, wonder-working goddess! charms
That *rock* to bloom; and tames the *painted shrew*;
And what will more surprise, *Lorenzo*! gives
To life's sick, nauseous *iteration*, change;
And straitens nature's circle to a line.

Believ'st thou this, *Lorenzo*? lend an ear,
A patient ear, thou'lt blush to disbelieve.

A languid, leaden *iteration* reigns,
And ever must, o'er those, whose joys are joys
Of sight, smell, taste: the cuckow-seasons sing
The small dull note to such as nothing prize,
But what those seasons, from the teeming earth,
To doating *sense* indulge. But nobler minds,
Which relish fruits unripen'd by the *sun*,
Make their days various; various as the dyes
On the dove's neck, which wanton in *his* rays.
On minds of dove-like innocence possess'd,
On light'ned minds, that bask in *virtue's* beams,
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves
In *that*, for which they long; for which they live.
Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heav'nly hope,
Each rising morning sees still higher rise;
Each bounteous dawn its novelty presents
To worth maturing, new strength, lustre, fame;
While nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel
Rolling *beneath* their elevated aims,
Makes their fair prospect fairer ev'ry hour;
Advancing *virtue* in a line to *bliss*;
Virtue, which Christian motives best inspire!
And *bliss*, which Christian schemes alone ensure!

And shall we then, for *virtue's* sake, commence
Apostates? and turn infidels for joy?

A truth it is, few doubt, but fewer trust,
 "He sins against *this* life, who slights the *next*."
 What is this life? how few their fav'rite know?
 Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,
 By passionately loving life, we make
 Lov'd life unlovely; hugging her to death.
 We give to time eternity's regard;
 And, dreaming, take our passage from our port.
 Life has no value as an end, but means;
 An end deplorable! a means divine!
 When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing; worse than nought;
 A nest of pains; when held as nothing, much;
 Like some fair hum'rists, life is most enjoy'd,
 When courted least; most worth, when disesteem'd;
 Then 'tis the seat of comfort, rich in peace;
 In prospect, richer far; important! awful!
 Not to be mention'd but with shouts of praise!
 Not to be thought on, but with tides of joy!
 The mighty basis of eternal bliss!

Where now the *barren rock*? the *painted shrew*?
 Where now, *Lorenzo*! life's *eternal round*?
 Have I not made my triple promise good?
 Vain is the world; but only to the vain.
 To what compare we then this varying scene,
 Whose worth ambiguous rises, and declines?
 Waxes and wanes? (in all propitious, *night*
 Assists me here) compare it to the moon;
 Dark in herself, and indigent; but rich
 In borrow'd lustre from a higher sphere:
 When gross guilt interposes, lab'ring earth,
 O'ershadow'd, mourns a deep eclipse of joy;
 Her joys, at brightest, pallid, to that font
 Of full effulgent glory, whence they flow.

Nor is that glory distant: O *Lorenzo*!
 A good man, and an angel! these between

60 THE COMPLAINT:

How thin the barrier? what divides their fate?
 Perhaps a moment; or perhaps a year;
 Or, if an age, it is a moment still;
 A moment, or eternity's forgot.
 Then be, what once they were, who now are gods;
 Be what *Philander* was, and claim the skies.
 Starts timid nature at the gloomy pass?
 The soft transition call it; and be cheer'd:
 Such it is often, and why not to thee?
 To hope the best is pious, brave, and wise,
 And may itself procure, what it presumes.
 Life is much flatter'd, death is much traduc'd;
 Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown.
 "Strange competition!"—True, *Lorenzo*! strange!
 So little *life* can cast into the scale.

Life makes the soul dependent on the dust;
Death gives her wings to mount above the spheres.
 Thro' chinks, stil'd organs, dim *life* peeps at light;
Death bursts th' involving cloud, and all is day;
 All eye, all ear, the disembod' d power.
Death has feign'd evils, nature shall not feel;
Life, ills substantial, wisdom cannot shun.
 Is not the mighty *mind*, that son of heaven!
 By tyrant *life* dethron'd, imprison'd, pain'd?
 By *death* enlarg'd, ennobl'd, deify'd?
Death but entombs the body; *life* the soul.

"Is *death* then guiltless? how he marks his way
 "With dreadful waste of what deserves to shine!
 "Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!
 "With various lustres *these* light up the world,
 "Which *death* puts out, and darkens human race."
 I grant, *Lorenzo*! this indictment just:
 The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror!
Death humbles these; more barb'rous *life*, the man,
Life is the triumph of our mould'ring clay;

Death, of the spirit infinite ! divine !
Death has no dread, but what frail *life* imparts ;
 Nor *life* true joy, but what kind *death* improves.
 No bliss has *life* to boast, till *death* can give
 Far greater ; *life*'s a debtor to the grave,
 Dark lattice ! letting in eternal day.

Lorenzo ! blush at *fondness* for a *life*,
 Which sends celestial souls on errands vile,
 To cater for the sense ; and serve at boards,
 Where ev'ry ranger of the wilds, perhaps
 Each reptile, justly claims our upper hand.
 Luxurious feast ! a soul, a soul immortal,
 In all the dainties of a brute bemir'd !
Lorenzo ! blush at *terror* for a *death*,
 Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,
 Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,
 And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,
 And eternize the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss.
 What need I more ? O *death*, the palm is thine.

Then welcome, *death* ; thy dreaded harbingers,
Age, and *disease* ; *disease*, tho' long my guest ;
 That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of *life* ;
 Which, pluckt a little more, will toll the bell,
 That calls my few friends to my funeral ;
 Where feeble nature drops, perhaps, a tear,
 While reason and religion, better taught,
 Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb
 With wreath triumphant. *Death* is victory ;
 It binds in chains the raging ills of *life* :
Lust and *ambition*, *wrath* and *avarice*,
 Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.
 That ills corrosive, cares importunate,
 Are not immortal too, O *death* ! is thine.
 Our day of dissolution ! — name it right ;

62 THE COMPLAINT:

'Tis our great pay-day; 'tis our harvest, rich
 And ripe: what tho' the fickle, sometimes keen,
 Just scars us, as we reap the golden grain?
 More than thy balm, O *Gilead*! heals the wound.
Birth's feeble cry, and *death's* deep dismal groan,
 Are slender tributes low-taxt nature pays
 For mighty gain: the gain of each, a life!
 But O! the last the former so transcends,
Life dies, compar'd; *life* lives beyond the grave.

And feel I, *death*! no joy from thought of thee?
Death, the great counsellor, who man inspires
 With ev'ry nobler thought, and fairer deed!
Death, the deliverer, who rescues man!
Death, the rewarder, who the rescu'd crowns!
Death, that absolves my birth; a curse without it!
 Rich *death* that realizes all my cares,
 Toils, virtues, hopes; without it, a chimera!
Death, of all pain the period, not of joy;
 Joy's *source*, and *subject*, still subsist unhurt;
 One, in my soul; and one, in her great fire;
 Tho' the four winds were warring for my dust.
 Yes, and from winds, and waves, and central night,
 Tho' prison'd there, my dust too I reclaim,
 (To dust when drop proud nature's proudest spheres.)
 And live entire. Death is the crown of life;
 Was death deny'd, poor man would live in vain;
 Was death deny'd, to live would not be life:
 Was death deny'd, ev'n fools would wish to die.
 Death wounds to cure; we fall; we rise; we reign!
 Spring from our fetters; fasten in the skies;
 Where blooming *Eden* withers in our sight:
 Death gives us more than was in *Eden* lost.
 This king of terrors is the prince of peace.
 When shall I die to vanity, pain, death?
 When shall I die?—when shall I live for ever?

NIGHT THE FOURTH.
THE
CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

CONTAINING

**Our only CURE for the FEAR of
DEATH.**

**And proper SENTIMENTS of HEART on that
inestimable Blessing.**

Humbly inscribed to the

HONOURABLE Mr. YORKE.

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THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT THE FOURTH.

A Much-indebted muse, O *York*! intrudes,
Amid the smiles of fortune, and of youth,
Thine ear is patient of a serious song.
How deep implanted in the breast of man
The dread of death? I sing its sov'reign cure.

Why start at death? where is he? death arriv'd
Is past; not come, or gone, he's never *here*.
Ere *hope*, *sensation* fails; black-boding man
Receives, not *suffers* death's tremendous blow.
The knell, the shroud, the mattock and the grave;
The deep damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;
These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
The terrors of the living, not the dead.
Imagination's fool, and *error's* wretch,
Man makes a death, which nature never made;
Then on the point of his own fancy falls;
And feels a thousand deaths, in fearing one.

But was death frightful, what has *age* to fear?
If prudent, age should meet the friendly foe,
And shelter in his hospitable gloom.
I scarce can meet a monument, but holds
My younger; every date cries—"Come away."
And what recalls me? look the world around,
And tell me what: the wisest cannot tell.
Should any born of woman give his thought
Full range, on just *dislike's* unbounded field;

Of things, the vanity ; of men, the flaws ;
 Flaws in the *best* ; the many, flaw all o'er,
 As *leopards* spotted, or as *Ethiops* dark ;
 Vivacious *ill* ; good dying immature ;
 (How immature, *Narcissa's* marble tells)
 And at its death bequeathing endless pain ;
 His heart, tho' bold, would sicken at the sight,
 And spend itself in sighs, for future scenes.

But grant to life (and just it is to grant
 To *lucky* life) some perquisites of joy ;
 A time there is, when, like a thrice-told tale,
 And that of no great moment, or delight,
 Long-rifled life of sweet can yield no more,
 But from our *comment* on the comedy,
 Pleasing *reflections* on parts well sustain'd,
 Or purpos'd *emendations* where we fail'd,
 Or hopes of plaudits from our candid judge,
 When, on their exit, souls are bid unrobe,
 Toss *fortune* back her tinsel, and her plume,
 And drop this mask of flesh behind the scene.

With me, that time is come ; my world is dead ;
 A new world rises, and new manners reign :
 Foreign comedians, a spruce band ! arrive,
 To push me from the scene, or hiss me there.
 What a pert race starts up ! the strangers gaze,
 And I at them ; my neighbour is unknown ;
 Nor that the worst : ah me ! the dire effect
 Of loit'ring here, of death defrauded long ;
 Of old so gracious (and let that suffice)
 My very master knows me not.—

Shall I dare say, peculiar is the fate ?
 I've been so long remember'd, I'm forgot.
 An object ever pressing dims the sight,
 And hides behind its ardor to be seen.

When in his courtiers ears I pour my plaint,
They drink it as the nectar of the great ;
And squeeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow ;
Refusal ! canst thou wear a smother form ?

Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme :
Who cheapens life, abates the *fear of death* :
Twice-told the period spent on stubborn *Troy*,
Court-favour, yet untaken, I besiege ;
Ambition's ill-judg'd effort to be rich.
Alas ! ambition makes my little, less ;
Embitt'ring the possess'd : why wish for more ?
Wishing, of all employments, is the worst ;
Philosophy's reverse ! and health's decay !
Was I as plump, as stall'd theology,
Wishing would waste me to this shade again.
Was I as wealthy as a *south-sea* dream,
Wishing is an expedient to be poor.
Wishing, that constant *heliac* of a fool ;
Caught at a court ; purg'd off by purer air,
And simpler diet ; gifts of rural life !

Blest be that hand divine, which gently laid
My heart at rest, beneath this humble shed.
The world's a stately bark, on dang'rous seas,
With pleasure seen, but boarded at our peril :
Here, on a single plank, thrown safe ashore,
I hear the tumult of the distant throng,
As that of seas remote, or dying storms ;
And meditate on scenes, more silent still ;
Pursue my theme, and fight the *fear of death*.
Here, like a shepherd gazing from his hut,
Touching his reed, or leaning on his staff,
Eager ambition's fiery chace I see ;
I see the circling hunt, of noisy men,
Burst law's inclosure, leap the mounds of right,

Pursuing, and pursu'd, each others prey;
 As wolves, for rapine; as the fox, for wiles;
 Till death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.

Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?

What, tho' we wade in wealth, or soar in fame?
 Earth's highest station ends in, "Here he lies:"
 And "dust to dust" concludes her noblest song.
 If this song lives, posterity shall know

One, tho' in *Britain* born, with courtiers bred,
 Who thought ev'n gold might come a day too late;
 Nor on his subtle death-bed plann'd his scheme
 For future vacancies in church or state;
 Some avocation deeming it—to die;
 Unbit by rage canine of dying rich;
 Guilt's blunder! and the loudest laugh of hell.

O my coevals! remnants of yourselves!

Poor human ruins, tott'ring o'er the grave!
 Shall we, shall aged men, like aged trees,
 Strike deeper their vile root, and closer cling,
 Still more enamour'd of this wretched soil?
 Shall our pale, wither'd hands be still stretch'd out,
 Trembling, at once, with eagerness and age?
 With av'rice, and convulsions grasping hard?
 Grasping at air! for what has earth beside?
 Man wants but little; nor that little, long;
 How soon must he resign his very dust;
 Which frugal nature lent him for an hour!
 Years unexperienc'd rush on num'rous ills;
 And soon as man, expert from time, has found
 The key of life, it opes the gates of death.

When in this vale of years I backward look,
 And miss such numbers, numbers too of such,
 Firmer in health, and greener in their age,
 And stricter on their guard, and sitter far

To play life's subtle game, I scarce believe
 I still survive: and am I fond of life,
 Who scarce can think it possible, I live?
 Alive by miracle! or, what is next,
 Alive by *Mead*! if I am still alive,
 Who long have bury'd what gives life to live,
 Firmness of nerve, and energy of thought.
 Life's lee is not more *shallow*, than *impure*,
 And *vapid*; *sense* and *reason* shew the door,
 Call for my bier, and point me to the dust.

O thou great Arbitrer of life and death!
 Nature's immortal, immaterial sun!
 Whose all-prolific beam late call'd me forth
 From darkness; teeming darkness, where I lay
 The worm's inferior, and, in rank, beneath
 The dust I tread on, high to bear my brow,
 To drink the spirit of the golden day,
 And triumph in existence; and could'st know
 No motive, but my bliss; and hast ordain'd
 A rise in blessing! with the *patriarch's* joy,
 Thy call I follow to the land unknown;
 I trust in thee, and know in whom I trust;
 Or life, or death, is equal; neither weighs:
 All weight in this—O let me live to thee!

Tho' nature's terrors, *thus*, may be repress;
 Still frowns grim *death*; guilt points the tyrant's spear;
 And whence all human guilt? from death forgot.
 Ah me! too long I set at nought the swarm
 Of friendly warnings, which around me flew;
 And smil'd, unsmitten: small my cause to smile!
Death's admonitions, like shafts upwards shot,
 More dreadful by delay, the longer ere
 They strike our hearts, the deeper is their wound.
 O think how deep, *Lorenzo*! here it stings:

Who can appease its anguish? how it burns!
 What hand the barb'd, envenom'd, thought can draw?
 What healing hand can pour the balm of peace?
 And turn my sight undaunted on the tomb?
 With joy—with grief, that *healing hand* I see;
 Ah! too conspicuous! it is fix'd on high.
 On high!—what means my phrensy? I blaspheme;
 Alas! how low! how far beneath the skies?
 The skies it form'd; and now it bleeds for me—
 But bleeds the balm I want—yet still it *bleeds*;
 Draw the dire steel—Ah no!—the dreadful blessing
 What heart, or can sustain? or dares forego?
 There hangs all human hope: that nail supports
 Our falling universe: that gone, we drop;
 Horror receives us, and the dismal wish
 Creation had been smother'd in her birth—
 Darkness his curtain, and his bed the dust;
 When stars and sun are dust beneath his throne!
 In Heav'n itself can such indulgence dwell?
 O what a groan was there! a groan *not his*.
 He seiz'd our dreadful right; the load sustain'd;
 And heav'd the mountain from a guilty world.
 A thousand worlds, *so* bought, were bought too dear.
 Sensations *new* in angels bosoms rise;
 Suspend their song; and make a pause in bliss.
 O for their song to reach my lofty theme!
 Inspire me, night! with all thy tuneful spheres inspire;
 Whilst I with *Seraphs* share seraphic themes,
 And shew to men, the dignity of man;
 Lest I blaspheme my subject with my song.
 Shall *Pagan* pages glow celestial flame,
 And *Christian* languish? on our hearts, not heads,
 Falls the foul infamy: my heart! awake.
 What can awake thee, unawak'd by *this*,

“ Expended Deity on human weal ?”

Feel the *great truths*, which burst the tenfold night
Of *Heathen* error, with a golden flood
Of endless day : to feel, is to be fir’d ;
And to believe, *Lorenzo!* is to feel.

Thou most indulgent, most tremendous Power !
Still more tremendous, for thy wond’rous love !
That arms, with awe more awful, thy commands ;
And foul transgression dips in sevenfold night ;
How our hearts tremble at thy love immense !
In love immense, inviolably just !
Thou, rather than thy *justice* should be stain’d,
Didst stain the *cross* ; and, work of wonders, far
The greatest, that thy dearest far might bleed.
Bold thought ! shall I dare speak it ? or repress ?
Should man more execrate, or boast, the guilt
Which rous’d such vengeance ? which such love inflam’d ?
O’er guilt (how mountainous !) with outstretcht arms,
Stern *justice*, and soft-smiling love, embrace,
Supporting, in full majesty, thy throne,
When seem’d its majesty to need support,
Or *that*, or man, inevitably lost.

What, but the fathomless of thought divine,
Could labour such expedient from despair,
And rescue both ? both rescue ! both exalt !

O how are both exalted by the *deed* !

The wond’rous deed ! or shall I call it more ?

A wonder, in Omnipotence itself !

A mystery, no less to gods than men !

Not *thus*, our infidels th’ *Eternal* draw,

A God all o’er, consummate, absolute,

Full-orb’d, in his whole round of rays complete :

They set at odds Heav’n’s jarring attributes ;

And, with one excellence, another wound ;

Maim Heav'n's perfection, break its equal beams,
 Bid *mercy* triumph over---God himself,
 Uncedify'd by their opprobrious praise :
 A God *all* mercy, is a God unjust.
 Ye brainless wits ! ye baptiz'd infidels !
 Ye worse for mending ! wash'd to fouler strains !
 The ransom was paid down ; the fund of heaven,
 Heav'n's inexhaustible, exhausted fund,
 Amazing, and amaz'd, pour'd forth the price,
 All price beyond : tho' curious to compute,
 Archangels fail'd to cast the mighty sum :
 Its value vast, ungraspt by minds *create*,
 For ever hides, and glows in, the *Supreme*.

And was the ransom paid ? it was : and paid
 (What can exalt the bounty more ?) for *you*.
 The sun beheld it---No, the shocking scene
 Drove back his chariot : *midnight* veil'd his face ;
 Not such as *this* ; not such as nature makes :
 A *midnight*, nature shudder'd to behold ;
 A *midnight* new ! a dread eclipse (without
 Opposing spheres) from her Creator's frown !
Sun ! didst thou fly thy Maker's pain ? or start
 At that enormous load of human guilt,
 Which bow'd his blessed head ; o'erwhelm'd his cross ;
 Made groan the centre ; burst earth's marble womb,
 With pangs, strange pangs ! deliver'd of her dead ?
 Hell howl'd ; and Heav'n that hour let fall a tear ;
 Heav'n wept, that men might smile ! Heav'n bled, that
 Might never die !—— (man

And is devotion virtue ? 'tis *compell'd* :
 What heart of stone, but glows at thoughts like these ?
 Such contemplations mount us ; and should mount
 The mind still higher ; nor ever glance on man,
 Unraptur'd, uninflam'd.----Where roll my thoughts

To rest from wonders? other wonders rise?
 And strike where-e'er they roll: my soul is caught:
 Heav'n's sov'reign blessings, clust'ring from the cross,
 Rush on her, in a throng, and close her round,
 The pris'ner of amaze!—In his blest *life*,
 I see the *path*, and in his *death*, the *price*,
 And in his great *ascent*, the *proof* supreme
 Of immortality.—And did he rise?

Hear, O ye nations! hear it, O ye dead!
 He rose! he rose! he burst the bars of death.

Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates!
 And give the King of Glory to come in.

Who is the King of Glory? He who left
 His throne of glory, for the pang of death.

Lift up your heads, ye everlasting gates!
 And give the King of Glory to come in.

Who is the King of Glory? He who slew
 The rav'nous foe, that gorg'd all human race!

The King of Glory, he, whose glory fill'd
 Heav'n with amazement at his love to man;

And with divine complacency beheld
 Pow'rs most illumin'd, wilder'd in the theme.

The theme, the joy, how then shall *man* sustain?
 Oh the burst gates! crush'd sling! demolish'd throne!

Last gasp of vanquish'd death! Shout earth and heaven!
 This *sum of good*, to man: whose nature, then,

Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb!
 Then, then, I rose; then first humanity

Triumphant past the chrystal ports of light,
 (Stupendous guest!) and seiz'd eternal youth;

Seiz'd in our name. E'er since, 'tis blasphemous
 To call man mortal. Man's mortality

Was, then, transferr'd to death; and Heav'n's duration
 Unalienably seal'd to this frail frame,

This child of dust.—Man, all-immortal ! hail;
Hail, Heav'n ! all-lavish of strange gifts to man !
Thine all the glory : man's the boundless bliss.

Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,
On Christian joy's exulting wing, above
Th' *Aonian* mount ? Alas, small cause for joy !
What if to pain, immortal ? if extent
Of being, to preclude a close of woe !
Where, then, my boast of immortality ?
I boast it still, tho' cover'd o'er with guilt :
For guilt, not innocence, his life he pour'd ;
'Tis guilt alone can justify his death ;
Nor that, unless his death can justify
Relenting guilt in Heav'n's indulgent sight.
If, sick of folly, I relent ; he writes
My name in heav'n, with that inverted spear
(A spear deep-dipt in blood !) which pierc'd his side,
And open'd there a font for all mankind
Who strive, who combat crimes, to drink, and live :
This, only *this*, subdues the *fear of death*.

And what is *this* ?---Survey the wond'rous cure :
And at each step, let higher wonder rise !

“ Pardon for infinite offence ! and pardon
“ Thro' means, that speak its value infinite !
“ A pardon bought with blood ! with blood divine !
“ With blood divine of him I made my foe !
“ Persisted to provoke ! tho' woo'd, and aw'd,
“ Blest, and chastiz'd, a flagrant rebel still !
“ A rebel 'midst the thunders of his throne !
“ Nor I alone ! a rebel universe !
“ My species up in arms ! not one exempt !
“ Yet for the foulest of the foul, he dies.
“ Most joy'd, for the redeem'd from deepest guilt !
“ As if our race was held of highest rank ;

“ And Godhead dearer, as more kind to man !”

Bound every heart ! and every bosom burn !

Oh what a scale of miracles is here !

Its lowest round, high-planted on the skies ;

Its tow’ring summit lost beyond the thought

Of man or angel : Oh that I could climb

The wonderful ascent, with equal praise !

Praise ! flow for ever, (if astonishment

Will give thee leave) my praise ! for ever flow ;

Praise ardent, cordial, constant, to high Heav’n

More fragrant, than *Arabia* sacrific’d ;

And all her spicy mountains in a flame.

So dear, so due to Heav’n, shall *praise* descend

With her soft plume, (from plausive angels wing

First pluckt by man) to tickle mortal ears,

Thus diving in the pockets of the great ?

Is *praise* the perquisite of ev’ry paw,

Tho’ black as hell, that grapples well for gold ?

Oh love of gold, thou meanest of amours !

Shall *praise* her odours waste on *virtue*’s dead,

Embaln the base, perfume the stench of guilt,

Earn dirty bread by washing *Ethiops* fair,

Removing filth, or sinking it from sight,

A scavenger in *scenes*, where *vacant* posts,

Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect

Their future ornaments ? from courts and thrones,

Return, apostate *praise* ? thou vagabond !

Thou prostitute ! to thy first love return,

Thy first, thy greatest, once unrival’d theme.

There flow redundant ; like *Meander* flow,

Back to thy fountain ; to that parent power,

Who gives the tongue to sound, the thought to soar,

The soul to *be*. Men homage pay to men,

Thoughtless beneath whose dreadful eye they bow.

In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,
 Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on thee,
 Great Sire ! whom thrones celestial ceaseless sing ;
 To prostrate angels, an amazing scene !
 O the presumption of man's awe for man !
 Man's author ! end ! restorer ! law ! and judge !
 Thine, all ; day thine, and thine this gloom of *night*,
 With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds !
 What, night eternal, but a frown from thee ?
 What, heav'n's meridian glory, but thy smile ?
 And shall not *praise* be thine ! not human praise ?
 While heav'n's high host on *Hallelujahs* live ?

O may I breathe no longer, than I breathe
 My soul in praise to him, who gave my soul,
 And all her infinite of prospect fair,
 Cut thro' the shades of hell, great Love ! by thee,
 Oh most adorable ! most unador'd !
 Where shall that praise begin, which ne'er should end !
 Where-e'er I turn, what claim on all applause !
 How is *night's* sable mantle labour'd o'er,
 How richly wrought, with attributes divine !
 What *wisdom* shines ! what *love* ! this midnight pomp,
 This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlay'd !
 Built with divine ambition ! Nought to thee ;
 For others this profusion : thou, apart,
 Above, beyond ! Oh tell me, mighty Mind !
 Where art thou ? shall I dive into the *deep* ?
 Call to the *sun*, or ask the roaring *winds*,
 For their Creator ? shall I question loud
 The *thunder*, if in that th' Almighty dwells ?
 Or holds he furious *storms* in strengthen'd reins,
 And bids fierce *whirlwinds* wheel his rapid carr ?
 What mean these questions ? trembling I retract ;
 My prostrate soul adores the *present* God :

Praise I a distant Deity? he tunes
 My voice (if tun'd); the nerve, that writes, sustains :
 Wrap'd in his being, I resound his praise :
 But tho' past *all* diffus'd, without a shore,
 His essence; *local* is his throne (as meet)
 To gather the dispers'd (as standards call
 The list'd from afar); to fix a point,
 A central point, collective of his sons,
 Since finite ev'ry nature, but his own.

The nameless *he*, whose nod is *nature's* birth;
 And *nature's* shield, the shadow of his hand;
 Her dissolution, his suspended smile!
 The great *first-last*! pavilion'd high he sits
 In darkness, from excessive splendor, borne,
 By gods unseen, unless thro' lustre lost.
 His glory, to created glory, bright,
 As that to central horrors; he looks down
 On all that soars; and spans immensity.

Tho' night unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,
 Boundless creation! what art thou? a beam,
 A mere effluvium of his majesty:
 And shall an atom of this atom-world
 Mutter, in dust and sin, the theme of heaven?
 Down to the centre should I send my thought
 Thro' beds of glitt'ring ore, and glowing gems;
 Their beggar'd blaze wants lustre for my lay;
 Goes out in darkness: if, on tow'ring wing,
 I send it thro' the boundless vault of stars;
 (The stars, tho' rich, what dross their gold to *thee*,
 Great! good! wise! wonderful! eternal King!)
 If to those *conscious* stars thy throne around,
 Praise ever-pouring, and imbibing bliss;
 And ask their strain; they want it, more they want,
 Poor their abundance, humble their sublime,

78 THE COMPLAINT:

Languid their energy, their ardor cold,
 Indebted still, their highest rapture burns
 Short of its mark, defective, tho' divine.

Still more---This theme is man's, and man's alone;
 Their vast appointments reach it not: they see
 On earth a bounty not indulg'd on high;
 And downward look for heav'n's superior praise!
 First born of Æther! high in fields of light!
 View man, to see the glory of your God!
 Could angels envy, they had envy'd here;
 And some *did* envy; and the rest, tho' gods,
 Yet still gods *unredeem'd* (there triumphs man,
 Tempted to weigh the dust against the skies)
 They less would feel, tho' more adorn, my theme.
 They sung *creation* (for in that they shar'd)
 How rose in melody, the child of love:
Creation's great superior, man! is thine;
 Thine is *redemption*; they just gave the key:
 'Tis thine to raise, and eternize, the song;
 Tho' human, yet divine; for should not *this*
 Raise man o'er man, and kindle Seraphs *here*!
Redemption! 'twas creation more sublime;
Redemption! 'twas the labour of the skies;
 Far *more* than labour—it was death in Heaven.
 A truth so strange! 'twere bold to think it true;
 If not far bolder still, to disbelieve.

Here pause, and ponder: was there death in heav'n?
 What then on earth? on earth, which struck the blow?
 Who struck it? who!—O how is man enlarg'd,
 Seen thro' this medium! how the pygmy tow'rs!
 How counterpois'd his origin from dust!
 How counterpois'd, to dust his sad return!
 How voided his vast distance from the skies!
 How near he presses on the seraph's wing!

Which is the scraph? which the born of clay?
 How this demonstrates, thro' the thickest cloud
 Of guilt, and clay condens'd, the son of Heaven!
 The double son; the made, and the re-made!
 And shall Heav'n's double property be lost?
 Man's double madness only can destroy.
 To man the bleeding cross has promis'd all;
 The bleeding cross has sworn eternal grace;
 Who gave his life, what grace shall he deny?
 O ye! who, from this *rock of ages*, leap,
 Disdainful, plunging headlong in the deep!
 What cordial joy, what consolation strong,
 Whatever winds arise, or billows roll,
 Our int'rest in the master of the storm!
 Cling there, and in wreck'd nature's ruins smile;
 While vile apostates tremble in a calm.

Man! know thyself. All wisdom centres there:
 To none man seems ignoble, but to man;
 Angels that grandeur, men o'erlook, admire:
 How long shall human nature be their book,
 Degen'rate mortal! and unread by thee?
 The beam dim reason sheds shews wonders there;
 What high contents! illustrious faculties!
 But the grand *comment*, which displays at full
 Our human height, scarce sever'd from divine,
 By Heav'n compos'd, was publish'd on the *cross*.

Who looks on that, and sees not in himself
 An awful stranger, a terrestrial god?
 A glorious partner with the Deity
 In that high attribute, immortal life?
 If a God bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm:
 I gaze, and as I gaze, my mounting soul
 Catches strange fire, eternity! at thee;
 And drops the world-- or rather, more enjoys:

How chang'd the face of nature ! how improv'd !
 What seem'd a Chaos, shines a glorious world,
 Or, what a world, an *Eden* ; heighten'd all !
 It is another scene ! another self !

And still another, as time rolls along ;
 And that a *self* far more illustrious still.

Beyond long ages, yet roll'd up in shades
 Unpierc'd by bold conjecture's keenest ray,
 What evolutions of surprising fate !

How nature opens, and receives my soul
 In boundless walks of raptur'd thought ! where gods
 Encounter, and embrace me ; what new births
 Of strange adventure, foreign to the sun,
 Where what now charms, perhaps, whate'er exists,
 Old *time*, and fair *creation*, are forgot !

Is this extravagant ? of man we form
 Extravagant conception, to be just :
 Conception unconfin'd wants wing to reach him :
 Beyond its reach, the Godhead only, more.
He, the great Father ! kindled at one flame
 The world of rationals ; one spirit pour'd
 From spirit's awful fountain ; pour'd himself
 Thro' all their souls ! but not in equal stream,
 Profuse, or frugal ; of th' inspiring God,
 As his wise plan demanded ; and when past
 Their various trials, in their various spheres,
 If they continue rational, as made,
 Resorbs them all into himself again ;
 His throne their centre, and his smile their crown.

Why doubt we, then, the glorious truth to sing,
 Tho' yet unsung, as deem'd perhaps too bold ?
 Angels are men of a superior kind :
 Angels are men in lighter habit clad,
 High o'er celestial mountains wing'd in flight ;

And men are angels, loaded for an hour,
Who wade this miry vale, and climb with pain,
And slipp'ry step, the bottom of the steep.
Angels their failings, mortals have their praise;
While *here*, of corps ethereal, such enroll'd,
And summon'd to the glorious standard soon
Which flames eternal crimson through the skies,
Nor are our *brothers* thoughtless of their kin,
Yet absent; but not absent from their love.
Michael has fought our battles; *Raphael* sung
Our triumphs; *Gabriel* on our errands flown,
Sent by the SOV'REIGN: and are these, O man!
Thy friends, thy warm allies? and thou (shame burn
The cheek to cinder!) rival to the brute?

Religion's all. Descending from the skies
To wretched man, the goddess in her left
Holds out *this* world, and, in her right, the *next*;
Religion! the sole voucher man is man;
Supporter sole of man above himself;
Ev'n in this night of frailty, change, and death,
She gives the soul a soul that acts a god.
Religion! providence! an after-state!
Here is firm footing; here is solid rock;
This can support us; all is sea besides;
Sinks under us; be storms, and then devours.
His hand the goodman fastens on the skies,
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.

As when a wretch, from thick, polluted air,
Darkness, and stench, and suffocating damps,
And dungeon horrors, by kind fate, discharg'd,
Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure
Surrounds him, and *Elysian* prospects rise,
His heart exults, his spirits cast their load;
As if new-born, he triumphs in the change.

So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims,
 And sordid sweets, from seculence and froth
 Of ties terrestrial, set at large, she mounts
 To reason's region, her own element,
 Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

Religion! thou the soul of happiness:
 And, groaning *Calvary*, of thee! *there* shine
 The noblest truths; *there* strongest motives sting:
 There, sacred violence assaults the soul;
 There, nothing but *compulsion* is forborn.
 Can love allure us? or can terror awe?
He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the sun;
He sighs!—the sigh earth's deep foundation shakes.
 If, in his love, so terrible, what then
 His wrath inflam'd? his tenderness on fire?
 Like soft, smooth oil, outblazing other fires?
 Can pray'r, can praise avert it?—Thou, my *all*!
 My theme; my inspiration! and my crown!
 My strength in age! my rise in low estate!
 My soul's ambition, pleasure, wealth!—my world!
 My light in darkness! and my life in death!
 My boast thro' time! bliss thro' eternity!
 Eternity, too short to speak thy praise!
 Or fathom thy profound of love to man!
 To man of men the meanest, ev'n to me!
 My sacrifice! my God!—what things are these!

What then art thou? by what name shall I call thee?
 Knew I the name devout archangels use,
 Devout archangels should the name enjoy,
 By me unrival'd; thousands more sublime,
 None half so dear, as that, which, tho' unspoke,
 Still glows at heart: O how omnipotence
 Is lost in love! thou great *Philanthropist*!
 Father of angels! but the friend of man!

Like *Jacob*, fondest of the younger born !
 Thou, who didst save him, snatch the smoking brand
 From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood !
 How art thou pleas'd, by bounty to distress !
 To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
 Too big for birth ! to favour, and confound ;
 To challenge, and to distance, all return !
 Of lavish love, stupendous heights to soar,
 And leave praise panting in the distant vale !
 Thy right too great defrauds thee of thy due ;
 And sacrilegious our sublimest song.
 But since the naked *will* obtains thy smile,
 Beneath this monument of praise *unpaid*,
 And future life symphonious to my strain,
 (That noblest hymn to Heav'n !) for ever lye
 Intomb'd my *fear of death* ! and ev'ry fear,
 The dread of ev'ry evil, but thy frown.

Whom see I yonder, so demurely smile ?
 Laughter a labour, and might break their rest.
 Ye Quietes, in homage to the skies !
 Serene ! of soft address ! who mildly make
 An obtrusive tender of your hearts,
 Abhorring violence ! who *halt* indeed ;
 But, for the blessing, *wrestle* not with Heaven !
 Think you my song, too turbulent ; too warm ?
 Are *passions*, then, the pagans of the soul ?
 Reason alone baptiz'd ? alone *ordain'd*
 To touch things sacred ? Oh for warmer still !
 Guilt chill my zeal, and age benumbs my powers ;
 Oh for an humbler heart, and prouder song !
 Thou, my much injur'd theme ! with that soft eye,
 Which melted o'er doom'd *Salem*, deign to look
 Compassion to the coldness of my breast ;
 And pardon to the winter in my strain.

Oh ye cold-hearted, frozen, formalists !
 On such a theme, 'tis impious to be calm ;
 Passion is reason, transport temper, *here*.
 Shall Heaven, which gave us ardor, and has shewn
 Her own for man so strongly, not disdain
 What smooth emollients in theology
 Recumbent virtue's downy doctors preach,
 That prose of piety, a lukewarm praise ?
 Rise odours sweet from incense uninflam'd ?
 Devotion, when lukewarm, is undevout ;
 But when it glows, its heat is struck to heaven,
 To human hearts her golden harps are strung ;
 High Heav'n's *Orchestra* chaunts *Amen* to man.

Hear I, or dream I hear, their distant strain,
 Sweet to the soul, and tasting strong of heaven,
 Soft wafted on celestial *pity's* plume,
 Thro' the vast spaces of the universe,
 To cheer me in this melancholy gloom ?
 Oh when will *death* (now stinglefs) like a friend,
 Admit me of their choir ? Oh when will *death*,
 This mould'ring, old, partition-wall throw down ?
 Give beings, one in nature, one abode ?
 Oh death divine ! that giv'st us to the skies !
 Great *future* ! glorious patron of the *past*,
 And *present* ! when shall I thy shrine adore ?
 From nature's *continent*, immensely wide,
 Immensely blest, this little *isle of life*,
 This dark, incarcerating *colony*,
 Divide us. Happy day ! that breaks our chain ;
 That manumits ; that calls from exile home ;
 That leads to nature's great *metropolis*,
 And re-admits us, thro' the guardian hand
 Of elder brothers, to our father's throne ;
 Who hears our advocate, and, thro' his wounds

Beholding man, allows that tender name.

'Tis this makes *Christian triumph*, a command :

'Tis this makes joy a *duty* to the wife ;

'Tis impious, in a good man, to be sad.

Seest thou, *Lorenzo* ! where hangs all our hope ?

Touch'd by the *cross*, we live ; or, *more* than die ;

That *touch* which touch'd not angels ; more divine

Than that, which touch'd confusion into form,

And darkness into glory ; partial *touch* !

Ineffably pre-eminent regard !

Sacred to man, and sov'reign thro' the whole

Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs

From heaven thro' all duration, and supports

In one illustrious, and amazing plan,

Thy welfare, *nature* ! and thy God's renown ;

That *touch*, with charm celestial, heals the soul

Diseas'd, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,

Turns earth to heav'n, to heav'nly thrones transforms

The ghastly ruins of the mould'ring tomb.

Dost ask me when ? when *he* who dy'd returns ?

Returns, how chang'd ! where then the man of woe ?

In glory's terrors all the Godhead burns ;

And all his courts exhausted by the tide

Of deities triumphant in his train,

Leave a stupendous solitude in heaven ;

Replenish'd soon ; replenish'd with increase

Of pomp, and multitude ; a radiant band

Of angels new ; of angels from the tomb.

Is this by fancy thrown remote ? and rise

Dark doubts between the promise, and event ?

I send thee not to volumes for thy cure ;

Read nature ; nature is a friend to truth ;

Nature is Christian ; preaches to mankind ;

And bids dead matter aid us in our creed.

Hast thou ne'er seen the comet's flaming flight ?
 Th' illustrious stranger passing, terror sheds
 On gazing nations, from his fiery train
 Of length enormous ; takes his ample round
 Thro' depths of ether ; coasts unnumber'd worlds,
 Of more than solar glory ; doubles wide
 Heav'n's mighty cape ; and then revisits earth,
 From the long travel of a thousand years.
 Thus, at the destin'd period, shall return
He, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze ;
 And with him all our triumph o'er the tomb.

Nature is dumb on this important point ;
 Or hope precarious in low whisper breathes ;
Faith speaks aloud, distinct ; ev'n *adders* hear,
 But turn, and dart into the dark again.
Faith builds a bridge across the gulph of death,
 To break the shock blind *nature* cannot shun,
 And lands thought smoothly on the farther shore.
 Death's terror is the mountain *faith* removes ;
 That mountain barrier between man and peace.
 'Tis *faith* disarms destruction ; and absolves
 From ev'ry clamorous charge, the guiltless tomb.

Why disbelieve ? *Lorenzo* !——“ *Reason* bids,
 “ All sacred reason.”——Hold her sacred still ;
 Nor shalt thou want a rival in thy flame :
 All-sacred *reason* ! source, and soul, of all
 Demanding praise, on earth, or earth above !
 My heart is thine : deep in its inmost folds,
 Live thou with life ; live dearer of the two.
 Wear I the blessed cross, by fortune stamp'd
 On passive nature, before thought was born ?
 My birth's blind bigot ! fir'd with *local* zeal !
 No ; *reason* rebaptiz'd me when adult ;
 Weigh'd true and false in her impartial scale ;

My heart became the convert of my head ;
And made that choice, which once was but my fate.

" On argument alone my faith is built :"

Reason pursu'd is *faith* ; and, unpursu'd
Where proof invites, 'tis reason, then, no more ;
And such our *proof*, that, or our *faith* is *right*,
Or *reason* lies, and Heav'n design'd it *wrong* :
Absolve we this ? what, then, is blasphemy ?

Fond as we are, and justly fond of *faith*,
Reason, we grant, demands our first regard ;
The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear ;
Reason the root, fair *faith* is but the flower ;
The fading flow'r shall die ; but *reason* lives
Immortal, as her father in the skies.

When *faith* is virtue, *reason* makes it so.
Wrong not the Christian ; think not reason *yours* ;
'Tis *reason* our great *master* holds so dear ;
'Tis *reason*'s injur'd rights his wrathresents ;
'Tis *reason*'s voice obey'd his glories crown ;
To give lost *reason* life, he pour'd his own :
Believe, and shew the reason of a man ;
Believe, and taste the pleasure of a God ;
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb ;
Thro' *reason*'s wounds alone, thy *faith* can die ;
Which dying, tenfold terror gives to-death,
And dips in *venom* his twice-mortal sting.

Learn hence what honours, what loud *Paeans* due
To those, who push our *antidote* aside ;
Those boasted friends to *reason*, and to *man*,
Whose fatal love stabs ev'ry joy, and leaves
Death's terror heighten'd gnawing on his heart.
These pompous sons of *reason* idoliz'd,
And vilify'd at once ; of reason dead,
Then deify'd, as monarchs were of old,

What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow?
 While *love of truth* thro' all their camp resounds,
 They draw *pride's* curtain o'er the noon-tide ray;
 Spike up their inch of reason, on the point
 Of philosophic wit, *call'd* argument;
 And then, exulting in their taper, cry,
 "Behold the sun:" and, *Indian-like*, adore.

Talk they of *morals*? O thou bleeding Love!
 Thou Maker of *new* morals to mankind!
 The grand morality is love of Thee.
 As wise as *Socrates*, if such they were,
 (Nor will they bate of that sublime renown)
 As wise as *Socrates*, might justly stand
 The definition of a modern fool.

Christian is the highest stile of man.
 And is there, who the blessed cross wipes off
 As a foul blot, from his dishonour'd brow?
 If angels tremble, 'tis at such a sight:
 The wretch they quit, desponding of their charge,
 More struck with grief or wonder, who can tell?

Ye sold to sense! ye citizens of earth!
 (For such alone the *Christian* banner fly)
 Know ye how wise your choice, how great your gain?
 Behold the picture of earth's happiest man:
 "He calls his wish, it comes; he sends it back,
 "And says, he call'd another; that arrives,
 "Meets the same welcome; yet he still calls on;
 "Till one calls him, who varies not his call,
 "But holds him fast, in chains of darkness bound,
 "Till nature dies, and judgment sets him free;
 "A freedom, far less welcome than his chain."

But grant man happy; grant him happy long;
 Add to life's highest prize her latest hour;
 That hour so late, is nimble in approach,
 That, like a post, comes on in full career;

How swift the shuttle flies, that weaves thy shroud !
 Where is the fable of thy former years ?
 Thrown down the gulph of time ; as far from thee
 As they had ne'er been thine ; the day in hand,
 Like a bird struggling to get loose, is going ;
 Scarce now possess'd, so suddenly 'tis gone ;
 And each swift moment fled, is death advanc'd
 By strides as swift : eternity is all ;
 And whose eternity ? who triumphs there ?
 Bathing for ever in the font of bliss !
 For ever basking in the Deity !
Lorenzo! who?—thy conscience shall reply.

O give it leave to speak ; 'twill speak ere long.
 Thy leave unask'd : *Lorenzo!* hear it now,
 While useful its advice, its accent mild.
 By the great edict, by divine decree,
Truth is deposited with man's *last hour* ;
 An honest hour, and faithful to her trust ;
Truth, eldest daughter of the Deity ;
Truth, of his council, when he made the worlds ;
 Nor less, when he shall judge the worlds he made ;
 Tho' silent long, and sleeping ne'er so sound,
 Smother'd with errors, and oppress'd with toys,
 That heav'n-commission'd hour no sooner calls,
 But from her cavern in the soul's abyss,
 Like him they fable under *Ætna* whelm'd,
 The goddess bursts in thunder, and in flame ;
 Loudly convinces, and severely pains.
 Dark *Demons* I discharge, and *Hydra*-stings ;
 The keen vibrations of bright *truth*—is hell :
 Just definition ! tho' by schools untaught.
 Ye deaf to truth ! peruse this parson'd page,
 And trust, for once, a prophet, and a priest ;
 "Men may *live* fools, but fools they cannot *die*."

How low the spirit lies; that waves thy thread!
 Where is the table or its lofty seat?
 Thrown down the gulph of time; as far from thee
 As they had ne'er been thine; the day in hand,
 Like a bird struggling to get loose, is gone;
 Space now belied, to loneliness of gloom;
 And each swift moment fled, in death's alarm.
 By which as swift: eternity is all,
 And whole eternity, who transpires there?
 Nothing for ever in the font of bliss!
 For ever looking to the Deity
 I want: who? — thy celestial face shall reply.
 Give it leave to speak; I will speak the long
 Thy name which I: I want: hear it now,
 While silent is silence, and silent mind,
 By the great edict, by divine decree,
 Thou art deposited within a clay jar,
 To paper, I want, and I want her soul,
 That, once a daughter of the Lord,
 Thou, of it, counsel: when he made the world,
 For all, were his flesh, judge the world he made,
 Two like long, and living souls found,
 Inward with spirit, and spirit with soul,
 That have a communion, none's longer call.
 The soul has entered in the flesh,
 The living tabernacle there which
 The golden bulb is slender, and in flame;
 Body's container, and secretly pine,
 Dark the great, and light the long,
 The living vibrations of the spirit — a bell,
 The bellman, I like, for the living
 To hear so true: I want this garden's page,
 And thus, for ever, a perfect, endless page,
 I want may see look, but look'st thou not the

NIGHT THE FIFTH.

THE

R E L A P S E.

HUMBLY INSCRIB'D

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

The Earl of LITCHFIELD.

NIGHT THE FIFTH

THE

R E L A P S E

HUNTER, INSCRIBED

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

THE EARL OF LITCHFIELD

NIGHT THE FIFTH.

THE
RELAPSE.

LORENZO! to recriminate is just.
Fondness for fame is avarice of air.
I grant the man is vain, who writes for praise.
Praise no man e'er deserv'd, who sought no more.

As just thy *second* charge. I grant the muse
Has often blush'd at her degen'rate sons,
Retain'd by *sense* to plead her filthy cause;
To raise the low, to magnify the mean,
And subtilize the gross into refin'd:
As if to magic numbers pow'rful charm
'Twas giv'n, to make a *civet* of their song
Obscene, and sweeten ordure to perfume.
Wit, a true Pagan, deifies the brute,
And lifts our-swine enjoyments from the mire.

The fact notorious, nor obscure the cause.
We wear the chains of *pleasure*, and of *pride*;
These share the man; and these distract him too;
Draw diff'rent ways, and clash in their commands.
Pride, like an eagle, builds among the stars;
But *pleasure*, lark-like, nests upon the ground.
Joys shar'd by brute-creation, pride resents;
Pleasure embraces: man would both enjoy,
And both at once: a point too hard to gain!
But, what can't wit, when stung by strong desire?

Wit dares attempt this arduous enterprize.
Since joys of *sense* can't rise to *reason's* taste;

In subtle *sophistry's* laborious forge,
Wit hammers out a reason new, that sloops
 To sordid scenes, and greets them with applause.
 Wit calls the graces the chaste zone to loose;
 Nor less than a *plump god* to fill the bowl.
 A thousand phantoms, and a thousand spells,
 A thousand opiates scatters, to delude,
 To fascinate, enebriate, lay asleep,
 And the fool'd mind delightfully confound.
 Thus that which shock'd the judgment, shocks no more
 That which gave *pride* offence, no more offends.
Pleasure and *pride*, by nature mortal foes,
 At war eternal, which in man shall reign,
 By *wit's* address, patch up a fatal peace,
 And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch,
 From rank, refin'd to delicate and gay.
Art, cursed art! wipes off th' indebted blush
 From nature's cheek, and bronzes ev'ry shame.
 Man smiles in ruin, glories in his guilt,
 And infamy stands candidate for praise.

All writ by man in favour of the soul,
 These *sensual ethics* far, in bulk, transcend.
 The flow'rs of eloquence, profusely pour'd
 O'er spotted vice, fill half the letter'd world.
 Can pow'rs of genius exercise their page,
 And consecrate enormities with song?

But let not these inexpressible strains
 Condemn the muse that knows her dignity;
 Nor meanly stops at time, but holds the world.
 As 'tis, in nature's ample field, a point,
 A point in her esteem; from whence to start,
 And run the round of universal space,
 To visit being universal there,
 And being's source, that utmost flight of mind!

Yet, spite of this so vast circumference,
Well knows, but what is *moral*, nought is *great*.
Sing *Sirens* only? do not angels sing?
There is in *poesy* a decent pride,
Which well becomes her when she speaks to *prose*,
Her younger sister; haply, not more wise.

Think'st thou, *Lorenzo*! to find pastimes here!
No guilty passion blown into a flame,
No foible flatter'd, dignity disgrac'd,
No fairy field of fiction all on flower,
No rainbow colours, *here*, or silken tale;
But solemn *counsels*, images of awe,
Truths, which eternity lets fall on man
With double weight, through these revolving spheres,
This death-deep silence, and incumbent shade:
Thoughts, such as shall revisit your last hour;
Visit uncall'd, and live when life expires;
And thy dark pencil, *midnight*! darker still
In melancholy dipt, embrowns the whole.

Yet this, ev'n this, my laughter-loving friends!
Lorenzo! and thy brothers of the smile!
If, what imports you most, can most engage,
Shall steal your ear, and chain you to my song.
Or if you fail me, know, the wise shall taste
The truths I sing; the truths I sing shall feel;
And, feeling, give assent; and their assent
Is ample recompence; is more than praise.
But chiefly thine, O *Litchfield*! nor mistake;
Think not un introduc'd I forc'd my way;
Narcissa, not unknown, not unall'y'd,
By virtue, or by blood, illustrious youth!
To thee, from blooming *amaranthine* bowers,
Where all the language *harmony*, descends
Uncall'd, and asks admittance for the muse:

96 THE COMPLAINT:

A muse that will not pain thee with thy praise ;
Thy praise she drops, by nobler still inspir'd.

O thou ! blest spirit ! *whether*, the Supreme,
Great antemundane Father ! in whose breast
Embryo-creation, unborn being, dwelt,
And all its various revolutions roll'd
Present, tho' future ; prior to themselves ;
Whose breath can blow it into nought again ;
Or, from his throne some delegated pow'r,
Who, studious of our peace, dost turn the thought
From vain and vile, to solid and sublime !
Unseen thou lead'st me to delicious draughts
Of inspiration, from a purer stream,
And fuller of the God, than that which burst
From fam'd *Castalia* : nor is yet allay'd
My sacred thirst ; though long my soul has rang'd
Through pleasing paths of *moral*, and *divine*,
By thee sustain'd, and lighted by the *stars*.

By *them* best lighted are the paths of *thought* ;
Nights are their *days*, their most illumin'd hours.
By *day*, the soul o'erborne by life's career,
Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,
Reels far from reason, jostled by the throng.
By *day* the soul is passive, all her thoughts
Impos'd, precarious, broken, ere mature.
By *night* from objects free, from passions cool,
Thoughts uncontroll'd, and unimpres'd, the births
Of pure election, arbitrary range,
Not to the limits of one world confin'd ;
But from *etherial* travels light on *earth*,
As voyagers drop anchor, for repose.

Let *Indians*, and the gay, like *Indians*, fond
Of feather'd fopperies, the sun adore :
Darkness has more divinity for me ;

It strikes thought inward ; it drives back the soul
To settle on herself, our point supreme !
There lies our theatre ; there sits our judge.
Darkness the curtain drops o'er life's dull scene ;
'Tis the kind hand of providence stretcht out
'Twixt man and vanity ; 'tis reason's reign,
And virtue's too ; these tutelary shades
Are man's *asylum* from the tainted throng.
Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too ;
It no less rescues virtue, than inspires.

Virtue for ever frail, as fair, below,
Her tender nature suffers in the croud,
Nor touches on the world, without a stain :
The world's infectious ; few bring back at eve,
Immaculate, the manners of the morn.
Something we thought, is blotted ; we resolv'd,
Is shaken ; we renounc'd, returns again.
Each salutation may slide in a sin
Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.
Nor is it strange : light, motion, concourse, noise,
All, scatter us abroad ; thought, outward-bound,
Neglectful of our home-affairs, flies off
In fume and dissipation, quits her charge,
And leaves the breast unguarded to the foe.

Present example gets within our guard,
And acts with double force, by few repell'd.
Ambition fires ambition ; love of gain
Strikes, like a pestilence, from breast to breast ;
Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours breathe ;
And inhumanity is caught from man ;
From smiling man. A slight, a single glance,
And shot at random, often has brought home
A sudden fever, to the throbbing heart,
Of envy, rancour, or impure desire.

98 THE COMPLAINT:

We see, we hear, with peril ; *safety* dwells
 Remote from *multitude* ; the world's a school
 Of *wrong*, and what proficients swarm around !
 We must or imitate or disapprove ;
 Must list as their accomplices, or foes ;
That stains our innocence ; *this* wounds our peace.
 From nature's birth, hence, *wisdom* has been smit
 With sweet recess, and languisht for the shade.

This sacred shade, and solitude, what is it ?
 'Tis the felt presence of the Deity.
 Few are the faults we flatter when alone.
Vice sinks in her allurements, is ungilt,
 And looks, like other objects, black by night.
 By night an atheist half-believes a God.

Night is fair virtue's immemorial friend ;
 The conscious moon, through every distant age
 Has held a lamp to *wisdom*, and let fall
 On *contemplation's* eye, her purging ray.
 The fam'd *Athenian*, he who woo'd from heav'n
Philosophy the fair, to dwell with men,
 And form their manners, not inflame their pride ;
 While o'er his head, as fearful to molest
 His lab'ring mind, the stars in silence slide,
 And seem all gazing on their future guest,
 See him soliciting his ardent suit,
 In private audience : all the live-long night,
 Rigid in thought, and motionless, he stands ;
 Nor quits his theme, or posture, till the sun
 (Rude drunkard rising rosy from the main)
 Disturbs his nobler intellectual beam,
 And gives him to the tumult of the world.
 Hail, precious moments ! stoln from the black waste
 Of murder'd time ! auspicious *midnight* ! hail !
 The world excluded, ev'ry passion hush'd,

And open'd a calm intercourse with heav'n,
 Here the soul sits in council; ponders *past*,
 Predestines *future* action; sees, not feels,
 Tumultuous life; and reasons with the storm;
 All her lies answers, and thinks down her charms.

What awful joy! what mental liberty!
 I am not pent in darkness; rather say
 (If not too bold) in darkness I'm embower'd.
 Delightful gloom! the clust'ring thoughts around
 Spontaneous rise, and blossom in the shade;
 But droop by day, and sicken in the *sun*.
 Thought borrows light elsewhere; from that *first* fire,
 Fountain of animation! whence descends
Urania, my celestial guest? who deigas
 Nightly to visit me, so mean; and *now*
 Conscious, how needful discipline to man,
 From pleasing dalliance with the charms of *night*
 My wand'ring thought recalls, to what excites
 Far other beat of heart; *Narcissa's* tomb!

Or is it feeble nature calls me back,
 And breaks my spirit into grief again?
 Is it a *Stygian* vapour in my blood?
 A cold slow puddle, creeping thro' my veins?
 Or is it *thus* with all men?—Thus, with all.
 What are we? how unequal! now we soar,
 And now we sink; to be *the same*, transcends.
 Our present prowess. Dearly pays the *soul*
 For lodging ill; too dearly rents her clay.
Reason, a baffled counsellor! but adds
 The blush of weakness, to the bane of woe.
 The noblest spirit fighting her hard fate,
 In this damp, dusky region, charg'd with storms,
 But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly;
 Or, flying, short her flight, and sure her fall

Our utmost strength, when down, to rise again;
And not to yield, tho' beaten, all our praise.

'Tis vain to seek in men for more than man.
Tho' proud in promise, big in previous thought,
Experience damps our triumph. I, who late,
Emerging from the shadows of the grave,
Where *grief* detain'd me pris'ner, mounting high
Threw wide the gates of everlasting day,
And call'd mankind to glory, shook off *pain*,
Mortality shook off, in ether pure,
And struck the stars; *now* feel my spirits fail;
They drop me from the zenith; down I rush,
Like him whom fable fledg'd with waxen wings.
In sorrow drown'd—but not, in sorrow, lost.
How wretched is the man, who never mourn'd!
I dive for precious pearl, in *sorrow's* stream:
Not so the thoughtless man that *only* grieves;
Takes all the torment, and rejects the gain,
(Inestimable gain!) and gives Heav'n leave
To make him but more wretched, not more wise.

If wisdom is our lesson (and what else
Ennobles man? what else have angels learnt?)
Grief! more proficient in thy school are made,
Than *genius*, or proud *learning*, e'er could boast.
Voracious *learning*, often over-fed,
Digests not into sense her motly meal.
This *book-case*, with dark booty almost burst,
This *forager* on others wisdom, leaves
Her native farm, her *reason*, quite untill'd.
With mixt manure she surfeits the rank soil;
Dung'd, but not dress'd; and rich to beggary.
A pomp untameable of weed prevails.
Her *servant's* wealth incumber'd *wisdom* mourns.

And what says *genius*? “*Let the dull be wise.*”

Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong ;
 And loves to boast, where blush men less inspir'd.
 It pleads exemption from the laws of *sense* ;
 Considers *reason* as a leveller ;
 And scorns to share a blessing with the croud.
 That wise it *could* be, thinks an ample claim
 To *glory*, and to *pleasure* gives the rest.
Craesus but sleeps, *Ardello* is undone.
Wisdom less shudders at a fool, than wit.

But wisdom smiles when humbled mortals weep.
 When *sorrow* wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe,
 And hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning shower ;
 Her seed celestial, then, glad *wisdom* sows ;
 Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.
 If so, *Narcissa* ! welcome my *relapse* ;
 I'll raise a tax on my calamity,
 And reap rich compensation from my pain.
 I'll range the plenteous intellectual field ;
 And gather ev'ry thought of sov'reign power
 To chase the moral maladies of man ;
Thoughts, which may bear transplanting to the skies,
 Tho' natives of this coarse penurious soil ;
 Nor wholly wither *there*, where *Seraphs* sing,
 Refin'd, exalted, not annull'd in heaven.
Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same
 In either clime, tho' more illustrious *there*.
 These choicely cull'd, and elegantly rang'd,
 Shall form a garland for *Narcissa's* tomb ;
 And, peradventure, of no fading flowers.

Say, On what themes shall puzzl'd choice descend ?

- " Th' importance of contemplating the tomb ;
- " *Why* men decline it ; *Suicide's* foul birth ;
- " The various *kinds of grief* ; the *faults of age* ;
- " And *death's dread character* — invite my song."

And, first, the importance of our end survey'd,
 Friends counsel quick dismissal of our grief:
 Mistaken kindness! our hearts heal *too soon*.
 Are *they* more kind than he, who struck the blow?
 Who bid it do his errand in our hearts,
 And banish peace, till *nobler guests* arrive,
 And bring it back, a true, and endless peace?
 Calamities are *friends*: as glaring *day*
 Of these unnumber'd lustres robs our sight;
 Prosperity puts out unnumber'd thoughts
 Of import high, and light divine, to man.

The man how blest, who, sick of gaudy scenes,
 (Scenes apt to thrust between us and ourselves!)
 Is led by choice to take his fav'rite walk,
 Beneath *death's* gloomy, silent, cypress shades,
 Unpierc'd by vanity's fantastic ray;
 To read his monuments, to weigh his dust,
 Visit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs!
 Lorenzo! read with me *Narcissa's* stone;
 (*Narcissa* was thy fav'rite) let us read
 Her moral stone; few doctors preach so well;
 Few orators so tenderly can touch
 The feeling heart. What *Pathos* in the date!
 Apt words can strike, and yet in them we see
 Faint images of what we, here, enjoy.
 What cause have *we* to build on length of life?
 Temptations seize, when *fear* is laid asleep;
 And ill foreboded is our strongest guard.

See from her tomb, as from an humble shrine,
 Truth, radiant goddess! fallies on my soul,
 And puts *delusion's* dusky train to flight;
 Disperses the mists our sultry *passions* raise,
 From objects low, terrestrial, and obscene;
 And shews the *real* estimate of things;

Which no man, unafflicted, ever saw ;
 Pulls off the veil from *virtue's* rising charms ;
 Detects *temptation* in a thousand lies.
Truth bids me look on men, as *autumn* leaves,
 And all they bleed for, as the summer's dust,
 Driv'n by the whirlwind ; lighted by her beams,
 I widen my horizon, gain new powers,
 See things invisible, feel things remote,
 Am present with futurities ; think nought
 To man so foreign, as the joys possess ;
 Nought so much his, as those beyond the grave.

No *folly* keeps its colour in *her* sight ;
 Pale *worldly wisdom* loses all her charms ;
 In pompous promise from her schemes profound,
 If future fate she plants, 'tis all in leaves,
 Like *Sibyl*, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss !
 At the first blast it vanishes in air.

Not so, *celestial* : wouldst thou know, *Lorenzo* !
 How differ *worldly wisdom*, and *divine* ?

Just as the waning, and the waxing moon.
 More empty *worldly wisdom* ev'ry day ;
 And ev'ry day more fair her *rival* shines.

When *later*, there's less time to play the fool.
 Soon our whole term for wisdom is expir'd,
 (Thou know'st she calls no council in the grave)
 And everlasting fool is writ in fire,

Or *real* wisdom wafts us to the skies.

As worldly schemes resemble *Sibyl's* leaves,
 The good man's days to *Sibyl's* books compare,
 (In antient story read, thou know'st the tale)

In price still rising, as in number less,
 Inestimable quite his final hour.

For that who thrones can offer, offer thrones ;
 Insolvent worlds the purchase cannot pay.

" Oh let me die his death ! " all nature cries.

" Then live his life " — all nature falters there,

Our great physician daily to consult,

To commune with the *grave*, our only cure.

What grave prescribes the best ? — a friend's ; and yet,

From a friend's grave, how soon we disengage ?

Ev'n to the dearest, as his marble, cold.

Why are friends ravish'd from us ? 'tis to bind,

By soft affection's ties, on human hearts,

The thought of death, which *reason*, too supine,

Or misemployed, so rarely fastens *there*.

Nor reason, nor affection, no, nor both

Combin'd, can break the witchcrafts of the world.

Behold th' inexorable hour at hand !

Behold th' inexorable hour forgot !

And to forget it, the chief *aim* of life,

Tho' well to ponder it, is life's chief *end*.

Is death, that ever threat'ning, ne'er remote,

That all-important, and that only sure,

(Come when he will) an unexpected guest ?

Nay, tho' invited by the loudest calls

Of blind *imprudence*, unexpected still ?

Tho' num'rous messengers are sent before

To warn his great arrival. What the cause,

The wond'rous cause, of this mysterious ill ?

All heav'n looks down astonish'd at the sight.

Is it that life has sown her joys so thick,

We can't thrust in a single care between ?

Is it, that life has such a swarm of cares,

The thought of death can't enter for the throng ?

Is it, that *time* steals on with downy feet,

Nor wakes *indulgence* from her golden dream ?

To-day is so like yesterday, it cheats ;

We take the lying sister for the same.

Life glides away, *Lorenzo* ! like a brook ;
 For ever changing, unperceiv'd the change.
 In the same brook none ever bath'd him twice :
 To the same life none ever twice awoke.
 We call the brook the same ; the same we think
 Our life, tho' still more rapid in its flow ;
 Nor mark the *much* irrevocably laps'd,
 And mingled with the sea. Or shall we say
 (Retaining still the brook to bear us on)
 That life is like a vessel on the stream ?
 In life embark'd, we smoothly down the tide
 Of time descend, but not on *time* intent ;
 Amus'd, unconscious of the gliding wave ;
 Till on a sudden we perceive a shock ;
 We start, awake, look out ; what see we there ?
 Our brittle bark is burst on *Charon's* shore.

Is this the cause *death* flies all human thought ?
 Or is it, *judgment* by the *will* struck blind,
 That domineering mistress of the soul !
 Like *him* so strong by *Dalilah* the fair ?
 Or is it *fear* turns startled *reason* back,
 From looking down a precipice so steep ?
 'Tis dreadful ; and the dread is wisely plac'd,
 By nature conscious of the make of man.
 A dreadful friend it is, a terror kind,
 A flaming sword to guard the tree of life.
 By that unaw'd, in life's most smiling hour,
 The *good man* would repine ; would *suffer* joys,
 And burn impatient for his promis'd skies.
 The *bad* on each punctilious pique of pride,
 Or gloom of humour, would give rage the rein,
 Bound o'er the barrier, rush into the dark,
 And mar the schemes of Providence below.

What groan was that, — *Lorenzo* ? *suries* ! rise ;

And drown, in your less execrable yell,
Britannia's shame. There took her gloomy flight,
 On wing impetuous, a black sullen soul,
 Blasted from hell, with horrid lust of death.
 Thy friend, the brave, the gallant *Altamont*,
 So call'd, so thought——And then he fled the field.
 Less base the fear of death, than fear of life.
 O *Britain*, infamous for suicide!
 An island in thy manners! far disjoin'd
 From the whole world of *rational*s beside!
 In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head,
 Wash the dire stain, nor shock the continent.

But thou be shock'd, while I detect the cause
 Of *self-assault*, expose the monster's birth,
 And bid *abhorrence* hiss it round the world.
 Blame not thy clime, nor chide the distant sun;
 The sun is innocent, thy clime absolv'd:
Immoral climes kind nature never made,
 The cause I sing, in *Eden* might prevail,
 And proves, It is thy folly, not thy fate.

The soul of man (let man in homage bow,
 Who names his soul) a native of the skies!
 High-born, and free, her freedom should maintain,
 Unfold, unmortgag'd for *earth's* little bribes.
 Th' illustrious stranger, in this foreign land,
 Like strangers, jealous of her dignity,
 Studious of home, and ardent to return,
 Of *earth* suspicious, *earth's* enchanted cup
 With cool reserve light-touching, should indulge,
 On *immortality*, her godlike taste;
 There take large draughts; make her chief banquet there.

But some reject this sustenance divine;
 To beggarly vile appetites descend;
 Ask alms of *earth*, for guests that came from heaven;

Sink into slaves ; and sell, for *present* hire,
 Their rich reversion, and (what shares its fate)
 Their native *freedom*, to the prince who sways
 This nether world. And when his payments fail,
 When his foul basket gorges them no more ;
 Or their pall'd palates lothe the basket full ;
 Are instantly, with wild demoniac rage,
 For breaking all the chains of providence,
 And bursting, their confinement ; tho' fast barr'd
 By laws divine and human ; guarded strong
 With *horrors* doubl'd to defend the pass,
 The blackest, *nature*, or dire *guilt*, can raise ;
 And moated round, with fathomless, *destruction*.
 Sure to receive and whelm them in their fall.

Such, *Britons* ! is the *cause*, to you unknown,
 Or worse, o'erlook'd ; o'erlook'd by magistrates,
 Thus, criminals themselves. I grant the deed
 Is madness ; but the madness of the *heart*.
 And what is that ? our utmost bound of *guilt*.
 A sensual, unreflecting life is big
 With monstrous births, and *suicide*, to crown
 The black infernal brood. The bold to break
 Heav'n's laws supreme, and desperately rush
 Thro' sacred *nature*'s murder, on their own,
 Because they never *think of death*, they die.
 'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,
 At once to shun, and meditate, his end.
 When by the bed of languishment we sit,
 (The seat of *wisdom* ! if our choice, not fate)
 Or, o'er our dying friends, in anguish hang,
 Wipe the cold dew, or stay the sinking head,
 Number their moments, and, in ev'ry clock,
 Start at the voice of an eternity ;
 See the dim lam' of life just feebly lift

108 THE COMPLAINT:

An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,
 Then sink again, and quiver into death,
 That most pathetic herald of our own;
 How read we such sad scenes? as sent to man
 In perfect vengeance? no; in pity sent,
 To melt him down, like wax, and then impress,
 Indelible, *death's* image on his heart;
 Bleeding for others, trembling for himself.
 We bleed, we tremble; we forget, we smile.
 The mind turns foul, before the cheek is dry.
 Our quick-returning *folly* cancels all;
 As the tide rushing raises what is writ
 In yielding sands, and smooths the letter'd shore.

Lorenzo! hast thou ever weigh'd a *sigh*?
 Or study'd the philosophy of *tears*?
 (A science, yet unlectur'd in our schools!)
 Hast thou descended deep into the breast,
 And seen their source? if not, descend with me,
 And trace these briny riv'lets to their springs.

Our fun'ral tears, from diff'rent causes, rise;
 As if from separate cisterns in the soul,
 Of *various* kinds, they flow. From tender hearts,
 By soft contagion call'd, *some* burst at once,
 And stream obsequious to the leading eye.
Some ask more time, by curious *art* distill'd.
Some hearts in secret hard, unapt to melt,
 Struck by the magic of the public eye,
 Like *Moses'* smitten rock, gush out amain.
Some weep to share the fame of the deceas'd,
 So high in merit, and to them so dear.
 They dwell on praises, which they think they share;
 And thus, without a blush, commend themselves.
Some mourn in proof, that something they could love.
 They weep not to *relieve* their grief, but *show*.

As conscious all their love is in arrear.
 Some mischievously weep, not unappris'd,
 Tears, sometimes, aid the conquest of an eye.
 With what address the soft *Ephesians* draw
 Their sable net-work o'er entangled hearts?
 As seen thro' crystal, how their roses glow,
 While *liquid pearl* runs trickling down their cheek?
 Of hers not prouder *Egypt's* wanton queen,
 Carousing gems, herself dissolv'd in love.
 Some weep at death, abstracted from the dead,
 And celebrate, like *Charles*, their own decease.
 By kind construction some are deem'd to weep,
 Because a decent veil conceals their joy.

Some weep in earnest; and yet weep in vain;
 As deep in indiscretion, as in woe.
Passion, blind passion! impotently pours
 Tears, that deserve more tears; while *reason* sleeps;
 Or gazes, like an idiot unconcern'd;
 Nor comprehends the meaning of the storm;
 Knows not it speaks to *her*, and *her alone*.
Irrationals all sorrow are beneath,
 That noble gift, that privilege of man!
 From sorrow's pang, the birth of endless joy.
 But *these* are barren of that birth divine:
 They weep impetuous, as the summer-storm,
 And full as short! the cruel grief soon tam'd,
 They make a pastime of the stings tale;
 Far as the deep-reshounding knell, they spread
 The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more.
 No grain of *wisdom* pays them for their woe.

Half round the globe, the tears pump'd up by death
 Are spent in wat'ring vanities of life;
 In making *folly* flourish still more fair,
 When the sick soul, her wonted stay withdrawn,

Reclines on earth; and sorrows in the dust;
 Instead of learning, *there*, her true support,
 Tho' there thrown down her true support to learn,
 Without Heav'n's aid, impatient to be blest,
 She crawls to the next shrub, or bramble vile,
 Tho' from the stately cedar's arms she fell,
 With stale, foresworn embraces, clings anew,
 The stranger weds, and blossoms, as before,
 In all the fruitless fopperies of life:
 Presents her weed, well-fancy'd, at the ball,
 And raffles for the death's head on the ring.

So wept *Aurelia*, till the destin'd youth
 Slept in, with his receipt for making smiles,
 And blanching fables into bridal bloom.
 So wept *Lorenzo* fair *Clarissa's* fate;
 Who gave that angel boy, on whom he doats;
 And dy'd to give him, orphan'd in his birth!
 Not such, *Narcissa*, my distress for thee.
 I'll make an altar of thy sacred tomb
 To sacrifice to wisdom.—What wast thou?
 “Young, gay, and fortunate!” Each yields a theme.
 I'll dwell on each, to shun thought more severe;
 (Heav'n knows I labour with severer still!)
 I'll dwell on each, and quite exhaust thy death.
 A soul without reflection, like a pile
 Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.

And, first, thy youth. What says it to gray hairs?
Narcissa, I'm become thy pupil now—
 Early, bright, transient, chaste, as morning dew,
 She sparkled, was exhal'd, and went to heav'n.
 Time on this head has snow'd; yet still 'tis borne
 Aloft; nor thinks but on another's grave.
 Cover'd with shame I speak it, age severe
 Old worn-out vice sets down for virtue fair.

With graceless gravity, chastising youth,
That youth chasteis'd surpassing in a fault,
Father of all, forgetfulness of death :
As if, like objects pressing on the sight,
Death had advanc'd too near us to be seen :
Or, that life's loan *time* ripen'd into right ;
And men might plead prescription from the grave ;
Deathless, from repetition of reprieve.
Deathless ? far from it ! *such* are dead already ;
Their hearts are bury'd, and the world their grave.

Tell me, some god ! my guardian angel ! tell,
What thus infatuates ? what enchantment plants
The phantom of an age 'twixt us, and death
Already at the door ? he knocks, we hear him,
And yet we will not hear. What mail defends
Our untouch'd hearts ? what miracle turns off
The pointed thought, which from a thousand quivers
Is daily darted, and is daily shunn'd ?
We stand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs
Around us falling ; wounded oft ourselves ;
Tho' bleeding with our wounds, immortal still !
We see time's furrows on another's brow,
And death intrench'd, preparing his assault ;
How few themselves, in that just mirror, see !
Or, seeing, draw their inference as strong !
There death is certain ; doubtful *here* : he *must*,
And, *soon* we *may*, within an age, expire.
Though grey our heads, our thoughts and aims are green ;
Like damag'd clocks, whose hand and bell dissent ;
Folly sings six, while *nature* points at twelve.

Absurd *longevity* ! more, more, it cries :
More life, more wealth, more trash of ev'ry kind.
And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails ?
Object, and *appetite*, must club for joy ;

Shall *folly* labour hard to mend the bow,
 Baubles, I mean, that strike us from *without*,
 While *nature* is relaxing ev'ry string?
 Ask *thought* for joy; grow rich and hoard *within*.
 Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease,
 Has nothing of more manly to succeed?
 Contract the taste immortal; learn ev'n now
 To relish what *alone* subsists hereafter.
Divine, or *none*, henceforth your joys for ever,
 Of *age* the glory is, to *wish* to die.
 That wish is *praise* and *promise*; it applauds
 Past life, and promises our future bliss.
 What weakness see not children in their fires!
 Grand-climacterical absurdities?
 Grey-hair'd authority, to faults of youth,
 How shocking? It makes folly thrice a fool;
 And our first childhood might our last despise.
Peace and *esteem* is all that age can hope.
 Nothing but *wisdom* gives the *first*; the *last*,
 Nothing, but the *repute of being wise*.
Folly bars both; our age is quite undone.

What folly can be ranker! like our shadows,
 Our wishes lengthen, as our sun declines.
 No wish should loiter, *then*, this side the grave.
 Our hearts should leave the world, before the knell
 Calls for our carcases to mend the soil.
 Enough to live in tempest, die in port;
Age should fly concourse, cover in retreat
 Defects of *judgment*; and the *will's* subdue;
 Walk thoughtful on the silent, solemn shore
 Of that vast ocean it must sail so soon;
 And put *good-works* on board; and wait the wind
 That shortly blows us into worlds unknown;
 If unconsider'd too, a dreadful scene!

All should be prophets to themselves; foresee
 Their future fate; their future fate foretaste;
 This art would waste the bitterness of death.
 The *thought* of death alone, the *fear* destroys.
 A disaffection to that precious thought
 Is more than *midnight* darkness on the soul,
 Which sleeps beneath it, on a *precipice*,
 Puff'd off by the first blast, and lost for ever.

Dost ask, *Lorenzo*, why so warmly press'd,
 By repetition hammer'd on thine ear,
 The thought of death! that thought is the machine;
 The grand machine! that heaves us from the dust,
 And rears us into men. The thought ply'd home
 Will soon reduce the ghastly *precipice*
 O'er hanging hell, will soften the descent,
 And gently slope our passage to the grave;
 How warmly to be wish'd! what heart of flesh
 Would trifle with tremendous? dare extremes
 Yawn o'er the fate of infinite? what hand,
 Beyond the blackest brand of censure bold,
 (To speak a language too well known to thee)
 Would at a moment give its *all* to chance,
 And stamp the die for an eternity?

Aid me, *Narcissa*! aid me to keep pace
 With *destiny*; and ere her scissars cut
 My thread of life, to break this tougher thread
 Of moral death, that ties me to the world.
 Sting thou my slumb'ring *reason* to send forth
 A thought of observation on the foe;
 To sally; and survey the rapid march
 Of his ten thousand messengers to man;
 Who, *Jebu*-like, behind him turns them all.
 All *accident* apart, by *nature* sign'd,

My warrant is gone out, tho' dormant yet ;
Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.

Must I then *forward* only look for death ?
Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there.

Man is a self-survivor ev'ry year.

Man, like a stream, is in perpetual flow.

Death's a destroyer of quondam prey.

My youth, my noon-tide, his ; my yesterday

The bold invader shares the *present* hour.

Each moment on the former flouts the grave.

While man is growing, life is in decrease ;

And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.

Our birth is nothing but our death begun ;

As tapers waste, that instant they take fire.

Shall we then fear, lest that should come to pass,

Which comes to pass each moment of our lives ?

If fear we must, let *that* death turn us pale,

Which murders *strength* and *order* : what remains

Should rather call on death, than dread his call.

Ye partners of my fault, and my decline !

Thoughtless of death, but when your neighbour's knell

(Rude visitant !) knocks hard at your dull sense,

And with its thunder scarce obtains your ear !

Be death your theme, in ev'ry place and hour ;

Nor longer want, ye monumental fires !

A brother tomb to tell you, you shall die.

That death you *dread* (so great is nature's skill)

Know, you shall *court*, before you shall enjoy.

But you are learn'd ; in volumes deep you sit ;

In wisdom shallow : pompous ignorance !

Would you be still more learned, than the learn'd ?

Learn well to know how much need not be known,

And what that *knowledge*, which impairs your *sense*.

Our needful knowledge, like our needful food,

Unhedg'd, lyes open in life's common field;
 And bids all welcome to the vital feast,
 You scorn what lyes before you in the page
 Of nature, and experience, moral truth;
 Of indispensable, eternal fruit;
 Fruit, on which mortals feeding turn to gods;
 And dive in science for distinguisht names,
 Dishonest fomentation of your pride;
 Sinking in virtue, as you rise in fame.
 Your learning, like the lunar beam, affords
 Light, but not heat; it leaves you undevout,
 Frozen at heart, while speculation shines.
 Awake, ye curious indagators! fond
 Of knowing all, but what avails you known.
 If you would learn death's character; attend.
 All casts of conduct, all degrees of health,
 All dies of fortune, and all dates of age,
 Together shook in his impartial urn,
 Come forth at random: or if choice is made,
 The choice is quite sarcastic, and insults
 All bold conjecture, and fond hopes of man.
 What countless multitudes, not only leave,
 But deeply disappoint us, by their deaths!
 Tho' great our sorrow, greater our surprise.

Like other tyrants, death delights to smite,
 What, smitten, most proclaims the pride of power,
 And arbitrary nod. His joy supreme,
 To bid the wretch survive the fortunate;
 The feeble wrap th' athletic in his shroud;
 And weeping fathers build their childrens tomb.
 Me thine, *Narcissa*! — What tho' short thy date?
 Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures.
 That life is long, which answers life's great end.
 The time that bears no fruit, deserves no name;

The man of wisdom is the man of years.
 In hoary youth *Methusalems* may die ;
 O how misdated on their flatt'ring tombs !

Narcissa's youth has lectur'd me thus far.

And can her *gaiety* give counsel too ?

That, like the *Jews* fam'd oracle of gems,
 Sparkles instruction ; such as throws new light,
 And opens more the *character of death* ;
 Ill known to thee, *Lorenzo* ! this thy vaunt :

“ Give death his due, the wretched, and the old ;

“ Ev'n let him sweep his rubbish to the grave ;

“ Let him not violate kind nature's laws,

“ But own man born to *live*, as well as *die*.”

Wretched and *old* thou giv'st him ; *young* and *gay*

He takes ; and *plunder* is a tyrant's joy.

What if I prove, “ The farthest from the *fear*,

“ Are often nearest to the *stroke of fate* ?”

All, more than common, menaces an end.

A blaze betokens brevity of life :

As if bright embers should emit a flame,

Glad spirits sparkl'd from *Narcissa's* eye,

And made youth younger, and taught life to live.

As nature's opposites wage endless war,

For *this* offence, as treason to the deep

Inviolable stupor of his reign,

Where *lust*, and turbulent *ambition*, sleep,

Death took swift vengeance. As he life detests,

More life is still more odious ; and, reduc'd

By conquest, aggrandizes more his power.

But wherefore aggrandiz'd ? by Heav'n's decree,

To plant the soul on her eternal guard,

In awful expectation of our end.

Thus runs death's dread commission : “ Strike, but *so*,

“ As most alarms the living by the dead.”

Hence *stratagem* delights him, and *surprize*,
And cruel sport with man's securities.
Not simple conquest, triumph is his aim;
And, where least fear'd, there conquest triumphs most.
This proves my bold assertion not too bold.

What are *his* arts to lay our fears asleep?
Tiberian arts his purposes wrap up
In deep dissimulation's darkest night.
Like princes unconfest in foreign courts,
Who travel under cover, *death* assumes
The name and look of *life*, and dwells among us.
He takes all shapes that serve his black designs:
Tho' master of a wider empire far
Than that, o'er which the *Roman* eagle flew;
Like *Nero*, he's a fidler, charioteer,
Or, drives his *Phaeton*, in female guise;
Quite unsuspected, till, the wheel beneath,
His disarray'd oblation he devours.

He most affects the forms least like himself,
His slender self. Hence barly corpulence
Is his familiar wear, and sleek disguise.
Behind the rosy bloom he loves to lurk,
Or ambush in a smile; or wanton dive
In dimples deep; love's eddies, which draw in
Unwary hearts, and sink them in despair.
Such, on *Narcissa's* couch, he loitered long,
Unknown; and, when detected, still was seen
To smile; such peace has innocence in death!

Most happy they! whom least his arts deceive.
One eye on *death*, and one full fix'd on *heaven*,
Becomes a mortal, and immortal man.
Long on his wiles a piqu'd and jealous spy,
I've seen, or dreamt I saw thy tyrant dress,
Lay by his horrors, and put on his smiles.

Say, muse, for thou remember'st, call it back,
And shew *Lorenzo* the surprizing scene;
If 'twas a dream, his genius can explain.

'Twas in a circle of the *gay* I stood.
Death would have enter'd; *nature* pusht him back;
Supported by a doctor of renown,
His point he gain'd. Then artfully dismiss
The sage; for *death* design'd to be conceal'd.
He gave an old vivacious usurer
His meagre aspect and his naked bones;
In gratitude for plumping up his prey,
A pamper'd spendthrift; whose fantastick air,
Well-fashion'd figure, and cockaded brow,
He took in change, and underneath the pride
Of costly linen, tuck'd his filthy shroud.
His crooked bow he straiten'd to a cane;
And hid his deadly shafts in *Myra's* eye.

The dreadful masquerader, thus equipt,
Out-sallies on adventures. Ask you where?
Where is he not! for his peculiar haunts,
Let *this* suffice; sure as night follows day,
Death treads in *pleasure's* footsteps round the world,
When *pleasure* treads the paths, which *reason* shuns.
When, against *reason*, riot shuts the door,
And *gaiety* supplies the place of *sense*,
Then, foremost at the banquet, and the ball,
Death leads the dance, or stamps the deadly die;
Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown.
Gayly carousing to his gay compeers,
Inly he laughs, to see them laugh at him,
As absent far: and when the revel burns,
When *fear* is banisht, and triumphant thought,
Calling for all the joys beneath the moon,
Against him turns the key; and bids him sup.

With their progenitors——He drops his mask;
Frowns out at full; they start, despair, expire.

Scarce with more sudden terror and surprize,
From his black masque of nitre, touch'd by fire,
He bursts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours,
And is not this triumphant treachery,
And *more than simple conquest*, in the fiend?

And now, *Lorenzo*, dost thou wrap thy soul
In soft security, because unknown
Which moment is commission'd to destroy?
In *death's* uncertainty thy danger lyes.

Is *death* uncertain? therefore be thou fixt;
Fixt as a centinel, all eye, all ear,
All expectation of the coming foe.

Rouse, stand in arms, nor lean against thy spear;
Lest slumber steal one moment o'er thy soul,
And *fate* surprize thee nodding. Watch, be strong;
Thus give each day the merit, and renown,
Of dying well; tho' doom'd but once to die.
Nor let life's *period* hidden (as from most)
Hide too from thee the precious *use* of life.

Early, not sudden, was *Narcissa's* fate:
Soon, not surprizing, *death* his visit paid.

Her thought went forth to meet him on his way,
Nor *gaiety* forgot it was to die.

Tho' *fortune* too (our third and final theme)
As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,
And ev'ry glittering gewgaw, on her sight,
To dazzle, and debauch it from its mark.

Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man;
And ev'ry thought that misses it, is blind.

Fortune, with youth and *gaiety*, conspir'd:
To weave a *triple* wreath of happiness,
(If happiness on earth) to crown her brow.

And could *death* charge thro' such a shining shield !

That shining shield invites the tyrant's spear.

As if to damp our elevated aims,

And strongly preach humility to man.

O how portentous is prosperity !

How, comet-like, it threatens, while it shines !

Few years but yield us proof of *death's* ambition

To cull his victims from the fairest fold,

And sheath his shafts in all the pride of life.

When flooded with abundance, purpl'd o'er

With recent honours, bloom'd with ev'ry bliss,

Set up in ostentation, made the gaze,

The gaudy centre, of the public eye,

When *fortune* thus has toss'd her child in air,

Snatcht from the covert of an humble state,

How often have I seen him dropt at once,

Our morning's envy ! and our ev'ning's sigh !

As if her bounties were the signal given,

The flow'ry wreath to mark the sacrifice,

And call *death's* arrows on the destin'd prey.

High-fortune seems in cruel league with *fate*.

Ask you for what ? to give his war on man

The deeper dread, and more illustrious spoil ;

Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.

And burns *Lorenzo* still for the sublime

Of life ? to hang his airy nest on high,

On the slight timber of the topmost bough,

Rockt at each breeze, and menacing a fall ?

Granting grim *death* at equal distance there ;

Yet *peace* begins just where *ambition* ends.

What makes man wretched ? happiness deny'd ?

Lorenzo ! no : 'tis happiness disdain'd.

She comes too meanly dress'd to win our smile ;

And calls herself *Content*, a homely name !

Our flame is *transport*, and *content* our scorn.
Ambition turns, and shuts the door against her,
 And weds a *toil*, a *tempest*, in her stead;
 A *tempest* to warm *transport* near of kin.
 Unknowing what our mortal state admits,
 Life's modest joys we ruin, while we raise;
 And all our ecstasies are wounds to peace.
 Peace, the full portion of mankind below.

And since thy peace is dear, ambitious youth!
 Of fortune fond! as thoughtless of thy fate!
 As late I drew *death's* picture, to stir up
 Thy wholesome fears; now, drawn in contrast, see
Gay fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand.
 See, high in air, the sportive goddess hangs,
 Unlocks her casket, spreads her glitt'ring ware,
 And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad
 Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.
 All rush rapacious; friends o'er trodden friends;
 Sons o'er their fathers, subjects o'er their kings,
 Priests o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair,
 (Still *more* ador'd) to snatch the golden show'r.

Gold glitters most, where *virtue* shines no more;
 As stars from absent suns have leave to shine.
 O what a precious pack of votaries
 Unkennell'd from the prisons, and the stews,
 Pour in, all op'ning in their idol's praise?
 All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand,
 And, wide-expanding their voracious jaws,
 Morsel on morsel swallow down unchew'd,
 Untasted, through mad appetite for more;
 Gorg'd to the throat, yet lean and rav'nous still,
 Sagacious all, to trace the smallest game,
 And bold to seize the greatest. If (blest chance!)
 Court-zephyrs sweetly breathe, they launch, they fly,

O'er just, o'er sacred, all forbidden ground,
 Drunk with the burning scent of place, or pow'r,
 Staunch to the foot of lucre, till they die.

Or, if for men you take them, as I mark
 Their manners, thou their various fates survey.
 With aim mis-measur'd, and impetuous speed,
Some darting, strike their ardent wish far off,
 Through fury to possess it: *some* succeed,
 But stumble, and let fall the taken prize.
 From *some*, by sudden blasts, 'tis whirl'd away,
 And lodg'd in bosoms that ne'er dream'd of gain.
 To *some* it sticks so close, that, when torn off,
 Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.
Some, o'er-enamour'd of their bags, run mad,
 Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.
 Together *some* (unhappy rivals! seize,
 And rend abundance into poverty;
 Loud croaks the raven of the law, and smiles:
 Smiles too the goddess; but smiles most at those,
 (Just victims of exorbitant desire!)
 Who perish at their own request, and, whelm'd
 Beneath her load of lavish grants, expire.
Fortune is famous for her numbers slain.
 The number small, which happiness can bear.
 Tho' *various* for a while their fates; at last
 One curse involves them all: at death's approach,
 All read their riches backward into loss,
 And mourn, in just proportion to their store.

And death's approach (if orthodox my song)
 Is hasten'd by the lure of *fortune's* smiles.
 And art thou still a glutton of bright gold?
 And art thou still rapacious of thy ruin?
Death loves a shining mark, a signal blow;
 A blow, which, while it executes, alarms;

And startles thousands, with a single fall.
 As when some stately growth of oak, or pine,
 Which nods aloft, and proudly spreads her shade,
 The sun's defiance; and the flock's defence;
 By the strong strokes of lab'ring hinds subdu'd,
 Loud groans her last, and, rushing from her height
 In cumb'rous ruin, thunders to the ground:
 The conscious forest trembles at the shock,
 And hill, and stream, and distant dale, resound.

These high-aim'd darts of *death*, and these alone,
 Should I collect, my quiver would be full.

A quiver, which, suspended in mid air,
 Or near heav'n's archer, in the zodiac, hung,
 (So could it be) should draw the public eye,
 The gaze and contemplation of mankind!

A constellation awful, yet benign,
 To guide the *gay* thro' life's tempestuous wave;
 Nor suffer them to strike the common rock,

"From greater danger to grow more secure,

"And, wrapt in happiness, forget their fate."

Lysander, happy past the common lot,
 Was warn'd a danger, but too *gay* to fear.

He woo'd the fair *Aspasia*: she was kind:

In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were blest.

All who knew, envy'd; yet in envy lov'd:

Can fancy form more finish'd happiness?

Fixt was the nuptial hour. Her stately dome

Rose on the sounding beach. The glitt'ring spires

Float in the wave, and break against the shore:

So break those glitt'ring shadows, human joys.

The faithless morning smil'd: he takes his leave,

To re-embrace in ecstasies, at eve.

The rising storm forbids. The news arrives:

Untold, she saw it in her servant's eye.

She felt it seen ; (her heart was apt to feel)
And, drown'd, without the furious ocean's aid,
In suffocating sorrows, shares his tomb.
Now, round the sumptuous, bridal monument,
The guilty billows innocently roar ;
And the rough sailor passing drops a tear.
A tear ?——can tears suffice ?——but not for me,
How vain our efforts ! and our arts, how vain !
The distant train of thought I took, to shun,
Has thrown me on my fate —— *These* dy'd together ;
Happy in ruin ! undivorc'd by death !
Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part, is peace——
Narcissa ! pity bleeds at thought of thee.
Yet thou wast only *near* me ; not *myself*.
Survive myself ? that cures all other woe.
Narcissa lives ; *Philander* is forgot.
O the soft commerce ! O the tender ties,
Close-twisted with the fibres of the heart !
Which, broken, break them ; and drain off the soul
Of human joy ; and make it pain to live.——
And is it then to live ? when *such* friends part,
'Tis the survivor dies——My heart ! no more.

NIGHT THE SIXTH.
THE
INFIDEL RECLAIM'D.

IN TWO PARTS.

CONTAINING

The NATURE, PROOF, *and* IMPORTANCE *of* IMMORTALITY.

PART THE FIRST.

Where, among other Things, GLORY and RICHES are particularly consider'd.

Humbly inscrib'd to the Right Honourable
HENRY PELHAM,
First LORD COMMISSIONER of the TREASURY, and
CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER.

IN LIGHT OF THE

INTERESTED RECORD

IN THE

CONSTITUTION

IN MATTER OF

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P R E F A C E.

FEW ages have been deeper in dispute about religion, than this. The dispute about religion, and the practice of it, seldom go together. The shorter, therefore, the dispute, the better. I think it may be reduced to this single question, Is man immortal, or is he not? If he is not, all our disputes are mere amusements or trials of skill. In this case, Truth, Reason, Religion, which give our discourses such pomp and solemnity, are (as will be shewn) mere empty sounds, without any meaning in them. But if man is immortal, it will behove him to be very serious about eternal consequences; or, in other words, to be truly religious. And this great fundamental truth, unestablish'd, or unawaken'd in the minds of men, is, I conceive, the real source and support of all our infidelity; how remote soever the particular objections advanced may seem to be from it.

Sensible appearances affect most men much more than abstract reasonings; and we daily see bodies drop around us, but the soul is invisible. The power which inclination has over the judgment, is greater than can be well conceived by those that have not had an experience of it; and of what numbers is it the sad interest, that souls should not survive! The heathen world confessed, that they rather hoped than firmly believed immortality; and how many heathens have we still amongst us! The sacred page assures us, that life and immortality is brought to light by the gospel: but by how many is the gospel rejected, or overlook'd! From these considerations, and from my being, accidentally, privy to the sentiments of some particular persons, I have been long persuaded, that most, if not all, our infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme for argument's

sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize) are supported in their deplorable error, by some doubt of their immortality, at the bottom. And I am satisfied, that men once thoroughly convinced of their immortality, are not far from being Christians. For it is hard to conceive, that a man fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly, and impartially, inquire after the surest means of escaping the one, and securing the other. And of such an earnest and impartial inquiry, I well know the consequence.

Here, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offer'd; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers; arguments, which appear to me altogether irresistible; and such as I am satisfied will have great weight with all who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bosoms, and of observing, with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes, round about them, in the world. If some arguments shall, here, occur, which others have declined, they are submitted, with all deference, to better judgment in this, of all points, the most important. For, as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed; but it is undisputed, for this reason only, viz. because, where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be indisputable. And, of consequence, no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity, which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.

NIGHT THE SIXTH.

THE

INFIDEL RECLAIM'D.

SHE * (for I know not yet her name in heaven)
 Not early, like *Narcissa*, left the scene;
 Nor sudden, like *Philander*. What avail?
 This seeming mitigation but inflames;
 This fancy'd med'cine heightens the disease.
 The longer known, the closer still she grew;
 And gradual parting is a gradual death.
 'Tis the grim tyrant's engine, which extorts
 By tardy pressure's still-increasing weight,
 From hardest hearts, confession of distress.

O the long, dark approach thro' years of pain,
 Death's gall'ry! (might I dare to call it so)
 With dismal *doubt*, and fable *terror*, hung;
 Sick hope's pale lamp, its only glimm'ring ray:
 There, fate my melancholy walk ordain'd,
 Forbid *self-love* itself to flatter, there.
 How oft I gaz'd, prophetically sad!
 How oft I saw her dead, while yet in smiles!
 In smiles she sunk *her* grief, to lessen *mine*.
 She spoke me comfort, and increas'd my pain.
 Like pow'rful armies trenching at a town,
 By slow, and silent, but resistless sap,
 In his pale progress gently gaining ground,
Death urg'd his deadly siege; in spite of art,
 Of all the balmy blessings nature lends
 To succour frail humanity. Ye stars!
 (Not now *first* made familiar to my sight)

* Referring to Night the Fifth.

And thou, O moon ! bear witness ; many a night
He tore the pillow from beneath my head,
 Ty'd down my fore attention to the shock,
 By ceaseless depredations on a life
 Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful post
 Of observation ! darker ev'ry hour !
 Less dread the day that drove me to the brink,
 And pointed at eternity below ;
 When my soul shudder'd at futurity ;
 When, on a moment's point, th' important dye
 Of life and death spun doubtful, ere it fell,
 And turn'd up life ; my title to more woe.

But why more woe ? more comfort let it be.
 Nothing is dead, but *that* which wish'd to die ;
 Nothing is dead, but wretchedness and pain ;
 Nothing is dead, but what incumber'd, gall'd,
 Block'd up the pass, and barr'd from *real life*.
 Where dwells *that* wish most ardent of the wise ?
 Too dark the sun to see it ; highest stars
 Too low to reach it ; *death*, great *death* alone,
 O'er stars and sun, triumphant, lands us there.

Nor dreadful our *transition* ; tho' the mind,
 An artist at creating self-alarms,
 Rich in expedients for inquietude,
 Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take
Death's portrait true ? the tyrant never *fat*.
 Our sketch, all random strokes, conjecture all ;
 Close shuts the grave, nor tells one single tale.
Death, and his image rising in the brain,
 Bear faint resemblance ; never are alike ;
Fear shakes the pencil, *fancy* loves excess,
 Dark *ignorance* is lavish of her shades ;
 And *these* the formidable picture draw.

But grant the worst ; 'tis past ; new prospects rise ;

And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.
 Far other views our contemplation claim,
 Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life;
 Views that suspend our agonies in death.
 Wrapt up in the thought of *immortality*,
 Wrapt in the single, the triumphant thought!
 Long life might lapse, age unperceiv'd come on;
 And find the soul unfated with her theme.
 Its *nature, proof, importance*, fire my song.
 O that my song could emulate my soul!
 Like her, immortal. No!—the soul disdains
 A mark so mean; far nobler hope inflames;
 If endless ages can outweigh an hour,
 Let not the *laurel*, but the *palm*, inspire.

Thy *nature, immortality!* who knows?
 And yet who knows it not? it is but life
 In stronger thread of brighter colour spun,
 And spun for ever; dipt by cruel fate
 In *Stygian* die, how *black*, how *brittle here!*
 How short our correspondence with the sun!
 And while it lasts, inglorious! our best deeds,
 How wanting in their weight! our highest joys
 Small cordials to support us in our pain,
 And give us strength to suffer. But how *great*
 To mingle int'rests, converse, amities,
 With all the sons of *reason*, scatter'd wide
 Through habitable space, where-ever born,
 Howe'er endow'd! to live free citizens
 Of universal nature! to lay hold
 By more than feeble *faith* on the *Supreme!*
 To call heav'n's rich unfathomable mines
 (Mines, which support archangels in their state)
 Our own! to rise in science, as in bliss,
 Initiate in the secrets of the skies!

To read creation ; read its mighty plan
 In the bare bosom of the Deity !
 The plan, and execution, to collate !
 To see, before each glance of piercing thought,
 All cloud, all shadow, blown remote ; and leave
 No mystery—but that of love divine,
 Which lifts us on the Seraph's flaming wing,
 From earth's *Aceldama*, this field of blood,
 Of inward anguish, and of outward ill,
 From darkness, and from dust, to *such* a scene !
 Love's element ! true joy's illustrious home !
 From earth's sad contrast (now deplor'd) more fair !
 What exquisite vicissitude of fate !
 Blest absolution of our blackest hour !

Lorenzo ! these are thoughts that make man man,
 The wise illumine, aggrandize the great.
 How great (while yet we tread the kindred clod,
 And ev'ry moment fear to sink beneath
 The clod *we* tread ; soon trodden by our sons)
 How great, in the wild whirl of *time's* pursuits
 To stop, and pause, involv'd in high presage,
 Through the long vista of a thousand years,
 To stand contemplating our distant selves,
 As in a magnifying mirror seen,
 Enlarg'd, ennobled, elevate, divine !
 To prophesy our own futurities !
 To gaze on thought on what all thought transcends !
 To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys
 As far beyond conception, as desert,
 Ourselves th' astonish'd talkers, and the tale !

Lorenzo ! swells thy bosom at the thought ?
 The swell becomes thee : 'tis an honest pride.
 Revere thyself ;—and yet thyself despise.
 His *nature* no man can o'er-rate ; and none

Can under-rate his *merit*. Take good heed,
Nor there be modest, where thou should'st be proud;
That almost universal error shun.

How *just* our pride, when we behold *those* heights!
Not those *ambition* paints in air, but those
Reason points out, and ardent *virtue* gains;
And angels emulate; our pride how just!
When mount we? when these shackles cast? when quit
The cell of the creation? this small nest,
Stuck in a corner of the universe,
Wrapt up in a fleecy cloud, and fine-spun air?
Fine-spun to sense; but gross and feculent
To souls celestial; souls ordain'd to breathe
Ambrosial gales, and drink a purer sky;
Greatly triumphant on *time's* farther shore,
Where virtue reigns, enrich'd with full arrears;
While pomp imperial begs an alms of peace.

In empire high, or in proud science deep,
Ye born of earth! on what can you confer,
With half the dignity, with half the gain,
The gust, the glow of rational delight,
As on *this* theme, which angels praise, and share?
Man's fates and favours are a theme in heaven.

What wretched repetition cloy's us *here*!
What periodic potions for the sick!
Distemper'd bodies! and distemper'd minds!
In an *eternity*, what scenes shall strike!
Adventures thicken! novelties surprise!
What webs of wonder shall unravel, *there*!
What full day pour on all the paths of heaven,
And light th' Almighty's footsteps in the deep!
How shall the blessed day of our discharge
Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of fate,
And straiten its inextricable maze!

If inextinguishable thirst in man
 To know ; how rich, how full, our banquet, *here!*
Here, not the *moral* world alone unfolds ;
 The world *material*, lately seen in shades,
 And, in those shades, by fragments only seen,
 And seen those fragments by the *lab'ring* eye,
 Unbroken, now, illustrious, and entire,
 Its ample sphere, its universal frame,
 In full dimensions, swells to the survey ;
 And enters, at one glance, the ravisht sight.
 From some superior point (where, who can tell ?
 Suffice it, 'tis a point where gods reside)
 How shall the stranger man's illumin'd eye,
 In the vast ocean of unbounded space,
 Behold an infinite of floating worlds
 Divide the chrystal waves of ether pure,
 In endless voyage, without port ? the *least*
 Of these disseminated orbs, how great ?
 Great as they are, what numbers these surpass,
 Huge, as *Leviathan*, to that small race,
 Those twinkling multitudes of little life,
 He swallows unperceiv'd ! *Stupendous* these !
 Yet what are these stupendous to the *whole* ?
 As particles, as atoms, ill-perceiv'd ;
 As circulating globules in our veins ;
 So vast the plan : fecundity divine !
 Exub'rant source ! perhaps, I wrong thee still.

If admiration is a source of joy,
 What transport hence ? yet this the least in heaven.
 What *this* to that illustrious robe *He* wears
 Who tost this mass of wonders from his hand,
 A specimen, an earnest, of his pow'r ?
 'Tis, to that glory, whence all glory flows,
 As the mead's meanest flow'ret to the sun,

Which gave it birth. But what, this sun of heaven?
 This bliss supreme of the supremely blest?
 Death, only death, the question can resolve.
 By death, cheap-bought th' ideas of our joy;
 The *bare* ideas! solid happiness
 So distant from its shadow chace'd below.

And chace we still the phantom thro' the fire,
 O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death?
 And toil we still for sublunary pay?
 Defy the dangers of the field, and flood,
 Or, spider-like, spin out our precious all,
 Our more than vitals spin (if no regard
 To great futurity) in curious webs
 Of subtle thought, and exquisite design;
 (Fine net-work of the brain!) to catch a fly?
 The momentary buzz of vain renown!
 A name, a mortal immortality!

Or (meaner still!) instead of grasping air,
 For sordid lucre plunge we in the mire?
 Drudge, sweat, thro' ev'ry shame, for ev'ry gain,
 For vile contaminating trash; throw up
 Our hope in heav'n, our dignity with man?
 And deify the dirt, matur'd to gold?
Ambition, av'rice; the two *Demons*, these
 Which goad thro' ev'ry slough our human herd,
 Hard-travel'd from the cradle to the grave.
 How low the wretches stoop! how steep they climb!
 These *Demons* burn mankind; but most possess
 Lorenzo's bosom, and turn out the skies.

Is it in time to hide *eternity*?
 And why not in an atom on the shore,
 To cover ocean? or a mote, the sun?
Glory, and wealth! have they this blinding pow'r?
 What if to *them* I prove *Lorenzo* blind?

136 THE COMPLAINT:

Would it surprife thee? be thou then surpris'd;
Thou *neither* know'ft: their nature learn from me.

Mark well, as foreign as *these subjects* feem,
What clofe connexion ties them to my theme.
First, what is *true* ambition? The purfuit
Of glory, nothing lefs than man can fhare.
Were they as vain, as gaudy-minded man,
As flatulent with fumes of felf-applaufe,
Their arts and conquefts *animals* might boast,
And claim their *laurel* crowns, as well as we;
But not *celestial*. Here we ftand alone;
As in our form, diftinct, pre-eminent;
If prone in thought, our ftature is our fhame,
And man fhould blufh, his forehead meets the fkies.
The *visible* and *prefent* are for brutes,
A flender portion! and a narrow bound!
Thefe *reason*, with an energy divine,
O'erleaps; and claims the *future* and *unfeen*;
The vailt unfeen! the future fathomlefs!
When the great foul buoys up to this high point,
Leaving grofs *nature's* fcdiments below,
Then, and then only, *Adam's* offspring quits
The fage and hero of the fields and woods,
Afferts his rank, and rifes into man.
This is ambition: this is *human* fire.

Can *parts* or *place* (two bold pretenders!) make
Lorenzo great, and pluck him from the throng?

Genius and *art*, ambition's boafled wings,
Our boaft but ill deferve. A feeble aid!
Dedalian engin'ry! if thefe alone
Affift our flight, *fame's* flight is *glory's* fall.
Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er fo high,
Our height is but the gibbet of our name.
A celebrated wretch when I behold,

When I behold a genius bright, and base,
Of tow'ring talents, and terrestrial aims;
Methinks I see, as thrown from her high sphere,
The glorious fragment of a soul immortal,
With rubbish mixt, and glitt'ring in the dust.
Struck at the splendid, melancholy sight,
At once *compassion* soft, and *envy*, rise——
But wherefore envy? talents angel-bright,
If wanting worth, are shining instruments
In false ambition's hand, to finish faults.
Illustrious, and give infamy renown.

Great *ill* is an atchievement of great *pow'r*.
Plain sense but rarely leads us far astray.
Reason the means, *affections* chuse our end;
Means have no merit, if our end amiss.
If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain;
What is a *Pelham's* head, to *Pelham's* heart?
Hearts are proprietors of all applause.
Right ends, and means, make wisdom: worldly-wisdom
Is but half-witted, at its highest praise.

Let *genius* then despair to make thee great;
Nor flatter *station*: what is station high?
'Tis a proud mendicant; it boasts, and begs;
It begs an alms of homage from the throng,
And oft the throng denies its charity.
Monarchs, and ministers, are awful names;
Whoever wear them, challenge our devoir.
Religion, public order, both exact
External homage, and a supple knee,
To beings pompously set up, to serve
The meanest slave: *all more* is merit's due,
Her sacred and inviolable right;
Nor ever paid the *monarch*, but the *man*.
Our hearts never bow but to superior worth;

Nor never fail of their allegiance there.

Fools, indeed, drop the *man* in their account,

And vote the *mantle* into majesty.

Let the small savage boast his silver fur ;

His royal robe unborrow'd, and unbought,

His *own*, descending fairly from his fires.

Shall man be proud to wear his livery,

And souls in *ermin* scorn a soul without ?

Can *place* or lessen us, or aggrandize ?

Pygmies are pygmies still, tho' perch on *Alps* ;

And pyramids are pyramids in vales.

Each man makes his own stature, builds himself :

Virtue alone out-builds the *pyramids* ;

Her monuments shall last, when *Egypt's* fall.

Of these sure truths dost thou demand the cause ?

The cause is lodg'd in *immortality*.

Hear, and assent. Thy bosom burns for pow'r ;

What station charms thee ? I'll install thee there ;

'Tis thine. And art thou greater than before ?

Then thou before wast something less than man.

Has thy new post betray'd thee into pride ?

That treach'rous pride betrays thy dignity ;

That pride defames humanity, and calls

The being mean, which *staffs* or *strings* can raise.

That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkness soars,

From blindness bold, and tow'ring to the skies.

'Tis born of *ignorance*, which knows not man.

An angel's second ; nor his second long.

A *Nero* quitting his imperial throne,

And courting glory from the tinkling string,

But faintly shadows an immortal soul,

With empire's self, to pride, or rapture, fix'd.

If nobler motives minister no cure,

Is a vanity forbids thee to be vain.

High worth is elevated place : 'tis more ;
 It makes the post stand candidate for thee ;
 Makes more than monarchs, makes an honest man ;
 Tho' no *exchequer* it commands, 'tis wealth ;
 And tho' it wears no *ribbon*, 'tis renown ;
 Renown, that would not quit thee, tho' disgrace,
 Nor leave thee pendent on a master's smile.
Other ambition nature interdicts ;
 Nature proclaims it most absurd in man,
 By pointing at his origin, and end ;
 Milk, and a swathe, *at first*, his whole demand ;
 His whole domain, *at last*, a turf, or stone ;
 To whom, *between*, a world may seem too small.
 Souls *truly* great dart forward on the wing
 Of *just* ambition, to the grand result,
 The curtain's fall ; *there*, see the buskin'd chief
 Unshod behind this momentary scene ;
 Reduc'd to his own stature, low or high,
 As vice, or virtue, sinks him, or sublimes ;
 And laugh at this fantastic mummery,
 This antic prelude of grotesque events,
 Where dwarfs are often stilted, and betray
 A littleness of soul by worlds o'er-run,
 And nations laid in blood. Dread sacrifice
 To Christian pride ! which had with horror shockt
 The darkest Pagans, offer'd to their gods.

O thou *most Christian* enemy to peace !
 Again in arms ? again provoking fate ?
 That prince, and that alone, is truly great,
 Who draws the sword reluctant, gladly sheathes ;
 On empire builds what empire far outweighs,
 And makes his throne a scaffold to the skies.

Why this so rare ? because forgot of all
 The day of death ; that venerable day,

Which sits as judge ; that day, which shall pronounce
On all our days, absolve them, or condemn.

Lorenzo, never shut thy thought against it ;

Be levees ne'er so full, afford it room,

And give it audience in the *cabinet*.

That friend consulted, flatteries apart,

Will tell thee fair, if thou art great, or mean.

To doat on aught may leave us, or be left,

Is that *ambition* ? then let flames descend,

Point to the centre their inverted spires,

And learn humiliation from a soul,

Which boasts her lineage from celestial fire.

Yet *these* are they, the world pronounces wise.

The world, which cancels nature's right and wrong,

And casts *new* wisdom : ev'n the grave man lends

His solemn face, to countenance the coin.

Wisdom for parts is madness for the whole.

This stamps the paradox, and gives us leave

To call the wisest weak, the richest poor,

The most ambitious, unambitious, mean ;

In triumph, mean ; and abject on a throne.

Nothing can make it less than mad in man,

To put forth all his ardor, all his art,

And give his soul her full unbounded flight,

But reaching *him*, who gave her wings to fly.

When blind ambition quite mistakes her road,

And downwards pores, for that which shines above,

Substantial happiness, and true renown ;

Then, like an idiot gazing on the brook,

We leap at stars, and fasten in the mud ;

At glory grasp, and sink in infamy.

Ambition ! pow'rful source of good and ill !

Thy strength in man, like length of wing in birds,

When disengag'd from earth, with greater ease,

And swifter flight, transports us to the skies :
By toys entangled, or in guilt bemir'd,
It turns a curse ; it is our chain, and scourge,
In this dark dungeon, where confin'd we lye,
Close-grated by the sordid bars of *sense* ;
All prospect of eternity shut out ;
And, but for execution, ne'er set free.

With error in *ambition* justly charg'd,
Find we *Lorenzo*, wiser in his *wealth* ?
What if thy rental I reform ? and draw
An inventory new to set thee right ?
Where, thy *true* treasure ? gold says, " not in me,"
And, " not in me," the di'mond. Gold is poor ;
India's insolvent : seek it in thyself,
Seek in thy naked self, and find it there ;
In *being* so descended, form'd, endow'd ;
Sky-born, sky-guided, sky-returning race !
Erect, immortal, rational, divine !
In *senses*, which inherit earth, and heavens ;
Enjoy the various riches *nature* yields ;
Far nobler ; give the riches they enjoy ;
Give taste to fruits ; and harmony to groves ;
Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright fire ;
Take in, at once, the landscape of the world,
At a small inlet, which a grain might close,
And half create the wond'rous world they see.
Our *senses*, and our *reason*, are divine.
But for the magic organ's pow'rful charm,
Earth were a rude, uncolour'd chaos still.
Objects are but th' occasion ; ours th' *exploit* ;
Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,
Which nature's admirable pictures draws ;
And beautifies creation's ample dome.
Like *Milton's Eve*, when gazing on the lake,

Man makes the matchless image, man admires.
Say then, shall man, his thoughts all sent abroad,
Superior wonders in himself forgot,
His admiration waste on objects round,
When Heav'n makes him the soul of all he sees?
Absurd! not rare! so great, so mean, is man.

What wealth in *senses* such as these! what wealth
In *fancy*, fir'd to form a fairer scene
Than *sense* surveys! in *mem'ry's* firm record,
Which, should it perish, could this world recall,
From the dark shadows of o'erwhelming years!
In colours fresh, originally bright
Preserve its portrait, and report its fate!
What wealth in *intellect*, that sov'reign power!
Which *sense*, and *fancy*, summons to the bar;
Interrogates, approves, or reprehends;
And from the mass those *underlings* import,
From their materials sifted, and refin'd,
And in *truth's* balance accurately weigh'd,
Forms *art*, and *science*, *government*, and *law*;
The solid basis, and the beauteous frame,
The vitals, and the grace of *civil* life!
And *manners* (sad exception!) set aside,
Strikes out, with master-hand, a copy fair
Of *his* idea, whose indulgent thought
Long, long ere chaos teem'd, plann'd *human* bliss.

What *wealth* in souls that soar, dive, range around,
Disdaining limit, or from place, or time;
And hear at once, in thought extensive, hear
Th' almighty *fiat*, and the *trumpet's* sound?
Bold, on creation's outside walk, and view
What was, and is, and *more* than e'er shall be;
Commanding, with omnipotence of thought,
Creations new, in *fancy's* field to rise!

Souls that can grasp whate'er the Almighty made,
And wander wild, through things impossible !
What *wealth*, in *faculties* of endless growth,
In quenchless *passions* violent to crave,
In *liberty* to chuse, in *power* to reach,
And in *duration* (how thy riches rise !)
Duration to perpetuate——boundless bliss ?

Ask you, what *power* resides in feeble man
That bliss to gain ? is *virtue's*, then, unknown ?
Virtue, our present peace, our future prize.
Man's unprecious, natural estate,
Improveable at will, in virtue, lyes ;
Its tenure sure ; its income is divine.

High-built abundance, heap on heap ! for what ?
To breed new wants, and beggar us the more ;
Then, make a richer scramble for the throng ?
Soon as this feeble pulse, which leaps so long
Almost by miracle, is tir'd with play,
Like rubbish from dislodging engines thrown,
Our magazines of hoarded trifles fly ;
Fly diverse ; fly to foreigners, to foes ;
New masters court, and call the former fool,
(How justly !) for dependence on their stay.
Wide scatter, first, our play-things, then, our dust.

Dost court abundance for the sake of peace ?
Learn, and lament, thy self-defeated scheme :
Riches enable to be richer still ;
And, *richer still*, what mortal can resist ?
Thus wealth (a cruel task-master !) enjoins
New toils, succeeding toils, an endless train !
And murders peace, which taught it first to shine.
The poor are *half* as wretched, as the rich ;
Whose proud and painful privilege it is,
At once, to bear a double load of woe ;

To feel the stings of *envy*, and of *want*,
 Outragious want ! both *Indies* cannot cure.

A competence is vital to content.

Much wealth is corpulence, if not disease ;

Sick, or incumber'd, is our happiness.

A competence is all we can *enjoy*.

O be content, where Heav'n can give no more !

More, like a flash of water from a lock,

Quickens our spirit's movement for an hour ;

But soon its force is spent, nor rise our joys

Above our native temper's common stream.

Hence disappointment lurks in ev'ry prize,

As bees in flow'rs ; and stings us with success.

The rich man, who denies it, proudly feigns ;

Nor knows the wise are privy to the lie.

Much learning shews how little mortals *know* ;

Much wealth, how little worldlings can *enjoy* :

At best, it babies us with endless toys,

And keeps us children till we drop to dust.

As monkeys at a mirror stand amaz'd,

They fail to find, what they so plainly see ;

Thus men, in shining riches, see the face

Of happiness, nor know it is a shade ;

But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again,

And wish, and wonder it is absent still.

How few can rescue opulence from want !

Who lives to *nature*, rarely can be poor ;

Who lives to *fancy*, never can be rich.

Poor is the man in debt ; the man of gold,

In debt to *fortune*, trembles at her pow'r.

The man of *reason* smiles at her and death.

O what a patrimony, this ? a *being*

Of such inherent strength and majesty,

Not worlds possess can raise it ; worlds destroy'd

Can't injure ; which holds on its glorious course,
When thine, O nature ! ends ; too blest to mourn
Creation's obsequies. What treasure, *this* !
The monarch is a beggar to the man.

Immortal ! ages past, yet nothing gone !
Morn without eve ! a race without a goal !
Unshorten'd by progression infinite !
Futurity for ever future ! life
Beginning still, where computation ends !
'Tis the description of a Deity !
'Tis the description of the meanest slave !
The meanest slave dares then *Lorenzo's* scorn ?
The meanest slave thy *soo'reign* glory shares.
Proud youth ! fastidious of the *lower* world !
Man's lawful pride includes humility ;
Stoops to the lowest ; is too great to find
Inferiors ; all immortal ; brothers all !
Proprietors *eternal* of thy love.

Immortal ! what can strike the *sense* so strong,
As this the *soul* ? it thunders to the thought ;
Reason amazes ; *gratitude* o'erwhelms ;
No more we slumber on the brink of fate ;
Rous'd at th' sound, th' exulting soul ascends,
And breathes her native air ; an air that feeds
Ambitions high, and fans ethereal fires ;
Quick-kindles all that is divine within us ;
Nor leaves one loit'ring thought beneath the stars.

Has not *Lorenzo's* bosom caught the flame ?

Immortal ! was but *one* immortal, how
Would others envy ! how would thrones adore !
Because 'tis common, is the blessing lost ?
How *this* ties up the bounteous hand of Heaven !
O vain, vain, vain ! all else : *eternity* !
A glorious, and a *needful* refuge that,

From vile imprisonment in abject views.
 'Tis *immortality*, 'tis that alone,
 Amid life's pains, abasements, emptiness,
 The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill.
 That only, and that amply, this performs ;
 Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above ;
 Their terror *those* : and *these* their lustre lose ;
 Eternity depending covers all ;
 Eternity depending all atchieves ;
 Sets earth at distance ; casts her into shades ;
 Blends her distinctions ; abrogates her pow'rs ;
 The low, the lofty, joyous, and severe,
 Fortune's dread frowns, and fascinating smiles,
 Make one promiscuous and neglected heap,
 The man beneath ; if I may call him man,
 Whom *immortality*'s full force inspires.
 Nothing terrestrial touches his high thought ;
 Suns shine unseen, and thunders roll unheard,
 By minds quite conscious of their high descent,
 Their present province, and their future prize ;
 Divinely darting upward ev'ry wish,
 Warm on the wing, in glorious *absence* lost.

Doubt you this truth ? why labours your belief ?
 If earth's whole orb by some due-distanc'd eye
 Was seen at once, her tow'ring *Alps* would sink,
 And level'd *Atlas* leave an even sphere.
 Thus *earth*, and all that earthly minds admire,
 Is swallow'd in *eternity*'s vast round.
 To that stupendous view, when souls awake,
 So large of late, so mountainous to man,
Time's toys subside ; and *equal* all below.

Enthusiastic, this ? then all are weak,
 But rank enthusiasts. To this godlike height
 Some souls have soar'd ; or martyrs ne'er had bled.

And all may do, what has by *man* been done.
 Who, beaten by these sublunary storms,
 Boundless, interminable joys can weigh,
 Unraptur'd, unexalted, uninflam'd ?
 What slave unblest; who from to-morrow's dawn
 Expects an empire ? he forgets his chain,
 And, throng'd in thought, his absent sceptre waves.

And what a sceptre waits us ! what a throne !
 Her own immense appointments to compute,
 Or comprehend her high prerogatives,
 In this her dark minority, how toils,
 How vainly pants, the human soul divine ?
 Too great the bounty seems for earthly joy ;
 What heart but trembles at so strange a bliss ?

In spite of all the truths the muse has sung,
 Ne'er to be priz'd enough ! enough revolv'd !
 Are there, who wrap the world so close about them,
 They see no farther than the clouds, and dance
 On heedless vanity's phantastic toe,
 Till, stumbling at a straw, in their career,
 Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and song ?
 Are there, *Lorenzo* ? is it possible ?
 Are there on earth (let me not call them men)
 Who lodge a soul immortal in their breasts ;
 Unconscious as the mountain of its ore ;
 Or rock of its inestimable gem ?
 When rocks shall melt, and mountains vanish, *these*
 Shall know their treasure ; treasure, then, no more.

Are there (still more amazing !) who resist
 The rising thought ? who smother, in its birth,
 The glorious truth ? who struggle to be brutes ?
 Who thro' this bosom-barrier burst their way ?
 And, with revers'd ambition, strive to sink ?
 Who labour downwards thro' th' opposing pow'rs

Of instinct, reason, and the world against them,
 To dismal hopes, and shelter in the shock
 Of endless night; night darker than the grave's?
 Who fight the proofs of immortality?
 With horrid zeal, and execrable arts,
 Work all their engines, level their black fires,
 To blot from man *this* attribute divine,
 (Than vital blood far dearer to the wife)
 Blasphemers, and rank atheists to themselves?

To contradict them see all nature rise!
 What object, what event, the moon beneath,
 But argues, or endears, an after-scene?
 To *reason* proves, or weds it to *desire*?
 All things proclaim it *needful*; some advance
 One precious step beyond, and prove it *sure*.
 A thousand arguments swarm round my pen,
 From *heav'n*, and *earth*, and *man*. Indulge a *few*,
 By nature, as her common habit, worn;
 So pressing Providence, a truth to teach,
 Which truth untaught, all other truths were vain.
 Thou! whose all-providential eye surveys,
 Whose hand directs, whose spirit fills and warms
 Creation, and holds empire far beyond!
 Eternity's inhabitant august!
 Of two eternities amazing Lord!
 One past, ere man's, or angels, had begun;
 Aid! while I rescue from the foe's assault
 Thy glorious immortality in *man*:
 A theme for ever, and for all, of weight,
 Of moment infinite! but relisht most
 By those, who love thee most, who most adore.

Nature, thy daughter, ever-changing birth
 Of thee the great *immutable*, to man
 Speaks wisdom; is his oracle supreme;

And he who most consults her, is most wise.
 Lorenzo, to this heav'nly *Delphos* haste ;
 And come back all immortal ; all-divine :
 Look nature through, 'tis *revolution* all ;
 All change, no death. Day follows night ; and night
 The dying day ; stars rise, and set, and rise ;
 Earth takes th' example. See, the *summer* gay,
 With her green chaplet, and ambrosial flowers,
 Droops into pallid *autumn* : *winter* grey
 Horrid with frost, and turbulent with storm,
 Blows *autumn*, and his golden fruits away :
 Then melts into the *spring* : soft *spring*, with breath
Favonian, from warm chambers of the south,
 Recalls the *first*. All, to re-flourish, fades.
 As in a wheel, all sinks, to re-ascend.
 Emblems of man, who passes, not expires.

With this minute distinction, emblems just,
Nature revolves, but man *advances* ; both
 Eternal, *that* a circle, *this* a line ;
That gravitates, *this* soars. Th' aspiring soul
 Ardent, and tremulous, like flame, ascends ;
Zeal, and *humility*, her wings to heaven.
 The world of matter, with its various forms,
 All dies into new life. Life born from death
 Rolls the vast mass, and shall for ever roll.
 No single atom, once in being, lost,
 With change of counsel charges the Most High.

What hence infers *Lorenzo* ? can it be ?
Matter immortal ? and shall *spirit* die ?
 Above the nobler, shall less noble rise ?
 Shall man alone, for whom all else revives,
 No resurrection know ? shall man alone,
 Imperial man ! be sown in barren ground,
 Less privileg'd than grain, on which he seeds ?

Is man, in whom alone is pow'r to prize
 The bliss of being, or with previous pain
 Deplore its period, by the spleen of fate,
 Severely doom'd death's single unredeem'd?

If nature's *revolution* speaks aloud,
 In her *gradation* hear her louder still.
 Look nature thro', 'tis next *gradation* all.
 By what minute degrees her scale ascends!
 Each middle nature join'd at each extreme,
 To that above it join'd, to that beneath.
 Parts, into parts, reciprocally shot.
 Aphot divorce: what love of union reigns!
 Here, dormant matter waits a call to life;
 Half-life, half-death, join there; here, life and sense;
 There, sense from reason steals a glimm'ring ray;
 Reason shines out in man. But how preserv'd
 The chain unbroken upward, to the realms
 Of incorporeal life; those realms of bliss,
 Where death hath no dominion? Grant a make
 Half-mortal, half-immortal; earthly, part;
 And part, ethereal; grant the soul of man
 Eternal; or in man the series ends.
 Wide yawns the gap; connexion is no more;
 Checkt *reason* halts; her next step wants support;
 Striving to climb, she tumbles from her scheme;
 A scheme, *analogy* pronounc'd so true;
Analogy, man's surest guide below.

Thus far, *all nature* calls on thy belief.
 And will Lorenzo, careless of the call,
 False attestation on all nature charge,
 Rather than violate his league with death?
 Renounce his reason, rather than renounce
 The dust below'd, and run the risque of heaven?
 O what indignity to deathless souls!

What treason to the majesty of man !
 Of man immortal ! hear the lofty stile :
 " If so decreed, th' Almighty will be done.
 " Let earth dissolve, yon pond'rous orbs descend,
 " And grind us into dust : the *soul* is safe ;
 " The *man* emerges ; mounts above the wreck,
 " As tow'ring flame from *nature's* fun'ral pyre ;
 " O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles ;
 " His charter, his inviolable rights,
 " Well-pleas'd to learn from thunder's impotence,
 " Death's pointless darts, and hell's defeated storms."

But these chimeras touch not thee, *Lorenzo* !
 The glories of the world, thy sev'nfold shield.
 Other ambition than of crowns in air,
 And superlunary felicities,
 Thy bosom warm. I'll cool it, if I can ;
 And turn those glories that enchant, against thee.
 What ties thee to *this* life, proclaims the *next*.
 If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure.

Come, my *ambitious* ! let us mount together
 (To mount *Lorenzo* never can refuse ;)
 And from the clouds, where pride delights to dwell,
 Look down on earth.—What seest thou ? wond'rous
 Terrestrial wonders, that eclipse the skies. (things !
 What lengths of labour'd lands ! what loaded seas,
 Loaded by man, for pleasure, wealth, or war :
 Seas, winds, and planets, into service brought,
 His art acknowledge, and promote his ends.
 Nor can th' eternal rocks his will withstand ;
 What levell'd mountains ! and what lifted vales !
 O'er vales, and mountains, sumptuous cities swell,
 And gild our landschape with their glitt'ring spires.
 Some 'mid the wond'ring waves majestic rise ;
 And *Neptune* holds a mirror to their charms.

Far greater still ! (what cannot mortal might ?)
 See, wide dominions ravish'd from the deep !
 The narrow'd deep with indignation foams.
 Or southward turn ; to *delicate*, and *grand*,
 The finer arts there ripen in the sun.
 How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,
 Ascend the skies ! the proud triumphal arch
 Shews us half heav'n beneath its ample bend.
 High thro' mid air, *here*, streams are taught to flow ;
 Whole rivers, *there*, laid by in basons, sleep.
Here, plains turn oceans : *there*, vast oceans join
 Thro' kingdoms channell'd deep from shore to shore ;
 And chang'd creation takes its face from man.
 Beats thy brave breast for formidable scenes,
 Where fame and empire wait upon the sword ?
 See fields in blood ; hear naval thunders rise ;
Britannia's voice ! that awes the world to peace.
 How yon enormous mole projecting breaks
 The mid-sea, furious waves ! their roar amidst,
 Out-speaks the Deity, and says, " O main !
 " Thus far, nor farther : new restraints obey."
 Earth's disembowl'd ! measur'd are the skies !
 Stars are detected in their deep recess !
 Creation widens ! vanquish'd *nature* yields !
 Her secrets are extorted ! *art* prevails !
 What monument of genius, spirit, pow'r !

And now, *Lorenzo* ! raptur'd at this scene,
 Whose glories render heav'n superfluous ! say,
 Whose footsteps these ? — *immortals* have been here.
 Could less than souls immortal this have done ?
 Earth's cover'd o'er with proofs of souls immortal ;
 And proofs of immortality forgot.

To flatter thy grand foible, I confess,
 These are *ambition's* works : and these are great :

But *this*, the least immortal souls can do ;
Transcend them all——But what can these transcend ?
Do talk me, what ?——one sigh for the *distrest*.
What then for *infidels* ? a deeper sigh.
'Tis moral *grandeur* makes the mighty man :
How *little* they, who think aught *great* below ?
All our ambitions death defeats, but one ;
And that it crowns——Here cease we : but, ere long,
More pow'rful proof shall take the field against thee,
Stronger than death, and smiling at the tomb.

NIGHT THE SEVENTH.
BEING THE
SECOND PART
OF THE
INFIDEL RECLAIM'D.
CONTAINING
The Nature, Proof, and Importance
OF
IMMORTALITY.

IMMORTALITY.
OF
THE NATURE, PROOF, AND IMPORTANCE
CONTAINING
INFIDEL RECLAIM'D.
OF THE
SECOND PART
BEING THE
NIGHT THE SEVENTH.

P R E F A C E.

AS we are at war with the power, it were well if we were at war with the manners of France. A land of levity is a land of guilt. A serious mind is the native soil of every virtue; and the single character that does true honour to mankind. The soul's immortality has been the favourite theme with the serious of all ages. Nor is it strange; it is a subject by far the most interesting and important, that can enter the mind of man. Of highest moment this subject always was, and always will be. Yet this its highest moment seems to admit of increase, at this day; a sort of occasional importance is superadded to the natural weight of it; if that opinion which is advanced in the preface to the preceding Night, is just. It is there supposed, that all our infidels, whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize, are betray'd into their deplorable error, by some doubt of their immortality, at the bottom. And the more I consider this point, the more am I persuaded of the truth of that opinion. Tho' the distrust of a futurity is a strange error; yet is it an error into which bad men may naturally be distressed. For it is impossible to bid defiance to final ruin, without some refuge in imagination, some presumption of escape. And what presumption is there? there are but two in nature; but two, within the compass of human thought. And these are,---That either God will not, or can not punish. Considering the divine attributes, the first is too gross to be digested by our strongest wishes. And since Omnipotence is as much a divine attribute as holiness, that God cannot punish, is as absurd a supposition, as the former. God certainly can punish, as long as the wicked man exists. In non-existence, therefore, is their only re-

sage; and, consequently, non-existence is their strongest wish. And strong wishes have a strange influence on our opinions; they bias the judgment in a manner, almost, incredible. And since on this member of their alternative, there are some very small appearances in their favour, and none at all on the other, they catch at this reed, they lay hold on this chimera, to save themselves from the shock, and horror of an immediate, and absolute, despair.

On reviewing my subject, by the light which this argument, and others of like tendency, threw upon it, I was more inclin'd, than ever, to pursue it, as it appear'd to me to strike directly at the main root of all our infidelity. In the following pages, it is, accordingly, pursued at large: and some arguments for immortality, new (at least to me) are ventured on in them. There also the writer has made an attempt to set the gross absurdities and horrors of annihilation in a fuller and more affecting view, than is (I think) to be met with elsewhere.

The gentlemen, for whose sake this attempt was chiefly made, profess great admiration for the wisdom of heathen antiquity: what pity 'tis they are not sincere! if they were sincere, how would it mortify them to consider, with what contempt, and abhorrence, their notions would have been received, by those whom they so much admire? what degree of contempt, and abhorrence, would fall to their share, may be conjectured by the following matter of fact (in my opinion) extremely memorable. Of all their heathen worthies, Socrates ('tis well known) was the most guarded, dispassionate, and composed: yet this great master of temper was angry: and angry at his last hour; and angry with his friend; and angry for what deserved acknowledgment; angry, for a right and tender instance of true friendship towards him. Is not this surprising? what could be the cause? the cause was for his honour; 'twas a truly

noble, tho', perhaps, a too punctilious, regard for immortality: for his friend asking him, with such an affectionate concern as became a friend, "Where he should deposit his remains?" it was resented by Socrates, as implying a dishonourable supposition, that he could be so mean, as to have regard for any thing, even in himself, that was not IMMORTAL.

This fact well consider'd, would make our infidels withdraw their admiration from Socrates; or make them endeavour, by their imitation of this illustrious example, to share his glory: and, consequently, it would incline them to peruse the following pages with candor and impartiality: which is all I desire; and that, for their sakes: for I am persuaded, that an unprejudiced infidel must, necessarily, receive some advantageous impressions from them.

July 7th, 1744.

NIGHT THE SEVENTH.

THE

INFIDEL RECLAIM'D.

HEAV'N gives the needful, but neglected, call.
 What day, what hour, but knocks at human
 To wake the soul to sense of future scenes? (hearts,
Deaths stand, like Mercurys, in ev'ry way;
 And kindly point us to our journey's end.
Pope, who could'st make immortals! art thou dead?
 I give thee joy: nor will I take my leave;
 So soon to follow. Man but dives to death;
 Dives from the sun, in fairer day to rise;
 The grave, his subterranean road to bliss.
 Yes, infinite indulgence plann'd it so;
 Thro' various parts our glorious story runs;
Time gives the preface, endless age unrolls
 The volume (ne'er unroll'd) of human fate.

*This, earth and skies * already have proclaim'd.*
 The world's a prophecy of worlds to come;
 And who, what God foretels (who speaks in *things,*
 Still louder than in *words*) shall dare deny?
 If *nature's* arguments appear too weak,
 Turn a new leaf, and stronger read in *man*.
 If man sleeps on, untaught by what he *sees,*
 Can he prove infidel to what he *feels*?
 He, whose blind thought futurity denies,
 Unconscious bears, *Bellerophon!* like thee,
 His own indictment; he condemns himself;
 Who reads his bosom, reads immortal life;
 Or, *nature*, there, imposing on her sons,

Has written fables; man was made a *lie*.

Why *discontent* for ever harbour'd there?

Incurable consumption of our peace!

Resolve me, why, the *cottager*, and *king*,

He whom sea-sever'd realms obey, and he

Who steals his whole dominion from the waste,

Repelling winter blasts with mud and straw,

Disquieted alike, draw sigh for sigh,

In fate so distant, in complaint so near?

Is it, that things *terrestrial* can't content?

Deep in rich pasture, will thy flocks complain?

Not so; but to their master is deny'd

To share their sweet *serene*. Man, ill at ease,

In this, not *his own* place, this foreign field,

Where nature foddors him with other food,

Than was ordain'd his cravings to suffice,

Poor in abundance, famish'd at a feast,

Sighs on for something *more*, when *most* enjoy'd.

Is Heav'n then kinder to thy flocks, than thee?

Not so; thy pasture richer, but remote;

In part, remote; for that remoter part

Man bleats from *instinct*, tho', perhaps, debauch'd

By *sense*, his *reason* sleeps, nor dreams the cause.

The cause how obvious, when his reason wakes!

His grief is but his grandeur in disguise;

And discontent is *immortality*.

Shall sons of ether, shall the blood of Heav'n,

Set up their hopes on earth, and stable *here*,

With brutal acquiescence in the mire?

Lorenzo! no; they shall be nobly pain'd;

The glorious *foreigners*, distress'd, shall sigh

On thrones; and thou *congratulate* the sigh:

Man's misery declares him born for bliss;

His anxious heart asserts the truth I sing.

And gives the sceptic in his head the lie.

Our heads, our hearts, our *passions*, and our *pow'rs*,
 Speak the same language; call us to the skies;
 Unripen'd *these* in this inclement clime,
 Scarce rise above conjecture, and mistake;
 And for this land of trifles *those* too strong
 Tumultuous rise, and tempest human life;
 What prize on earth can pay us for the storm?
 Meet objects for our *passions* Heav'n ordain'd,
 Objects that challenge all their fire, and leave
 No fault, but in defect: blest Heav'n! avert
 A bounded ardor for unbounded bliss:
 O for a bliss unbounded! far beneath
 A soul immortal, is a mortal joy,
 Nor are our *pow'rs* to perish immature;
 But, after feeble effort *here*, beneath
 A brighter sun, and in a nobler soil,
 Transplanted from this sublunary bed,
 Shall flourish fair, and put forth all their bloom.

Reason progressive, *instinct* is complete;
 Swift *instinct* leaps; slow reason feebly climbs.
 Brutes soon their zenith reach: their little all
 Flows in at once: in ages they no more
 Could know, or do, or covet, or enjoy.
 Were *man* to live co-eval with the sun,
 The patriarch-pupil would be learning still;
 Yet, dying, leave his lesson half-unlearn't.
 Men perish in advance, as if the sun
 Should set ere noon, in *eastern* oceans drown'd;
 If fit, with *dim*, *illustrious* to compare,
 The sun's *meridian*, with the *soul* of man.
 To man, why, stepdame nature! so severe?
 Why thrown aside thy master-piece half-wrought,
 While meaner efforts thy last hand enjoy?

Or, if abortively poor man must die,
 Nor reach, what reach he might, why die in *dread*?
 Why curst with foresight? wise to misery?
 Why of his proud prerogative the prey?
 Why less pre-eminent in rank, than pain?
 His *immortality* alone can tell;
 Full ample fund to balance all amiss,
 And turn the scale in favour of the just!

His *immortality* alone can solve
 That darkeſt of *aenigmas*, human *hope*;
 Of all the darkeſt, if at death we die.
Hope, eager hope, th' aſſaſſin of our joy,
 All *preſent* bleſſings treading under foot,
 Is ſcarce a milder tyrant than *deſpair*.
 With no paſt toils content, ſtill planning new,
Hope turns us o'er to death alone for eaſe.
Poſſeſſion, why, more taſteleſs than *purſuit*?
 Why is a wiſh far dearer than a crown?
 That wiſh accompliſh'd, why, the grave of bliſs?
 Becauſe, in the *great future* bury'd deep,
 Beyond our plans of empire, and renown,
 Lyes *all* that man with ardor ſhould purſue;
 And *He* who made him, bent him to the right.

Man's heart th' ALMIGHTY to the *future* ſets,
 By ſecret, and inviolable ſprings;
 And makes his hope his ſublunary joy.
 Man's heart eats all things, and is hungry ſtill;
 "More, more!" the glutton cries: for ſomething new
 So rages appetite, if man can't mount,
 He will deſcend. He ſtarves on the *poſſeſt*.
 Hence, the world's maſter, from ambition's ſpire,
 In *Caprea* plung'd; and div'd beneath the brute.
 In that rank fly why wallow'd empire's ſon
 Supreme? becauſe he could no higher fly;

His riot was ambition in despair.

Old Rome consulted birds; Lorenzo! thou
With more success, the flight of *hope* survey;
Of restless hope, for ever on the wing.
High-perch'd o'er ev'ry thought that falcon sits,
To fly at all that rises in her sight;
And, never stooping, but to mount again
Next moment, she betrays her aims mistake,
And owns her quarry lodg'd beyond the grave.

There should it fail us (it must fail us there,
If being fails) more mournful riddles rise,
And *virtue* vies with *hope* in mystery.
Why *virtue*? where its praise, its being, fled?
Virtue is true self-interest pursu'd:
What true self-interest of *quite-mortal* man?
To close with all that makes him happy *here*.
If vice (as sometimes) is our friend on earth,
Then vice is virtue; 'tis our *sov'reign* good.
In *self-applause* is virtue's golden prize;
No self-applause attends it on thy scheme;
Whence self-applause? from conscience of the right;
And what is right, but means of happiness?
No means of happiness when *virtue* yields;
That basis failing, falls the building too,
And lays in ruins ev'ry virtuous joy.

The rigid guardian of a blameless heart,
So long rever'd, so long reputed wise,
Is weak; with rank knight-errantries o'er-run.
Why beats thy bosom with illustrious dreams
Of self-exposure, laudable, and great?
Of gallant enterprize, and glorious death?
Die for thy country?—no!—no! romantic fool!
Seize, seize the plank thyself, and let her sink:
Thy country? what to thee?—the God-head, what?

(I speak with awe !) tho' he should bid thee bleed ?
 If, with thy blood, thy *final* hope is spilt,
 Nor can Omnipotence reward the blow,
 Be deaf ; preserve thy being ; disobey.

Nor is it disobedience : know, *Lorenzo* !
 Whate'er the *Almighty's* subsequent command,
 His first command is *this*,—"Man, love thyself."
 In this alone, free-agents are *not* free.
 Existence is the basis, bliss the prize ;
 If *virtue* costs existence, 'tis a crime ;
 Bold violation of our law *supreme*,
 Black suicide ; tho' nations, which consult
 Their gain, at thy expence, resound applause.

Since *virtue's* recompense is doubtful, *here* ;
 If man dies wholly, well may we demand,
 Why is man *suffer'd* to be good in vain ?
 Why to be good in vain, is man *enjoin'd* ?
 Why to be good in vain, is man *betray'd* ?
 Betray'd by traitors lodg'd in his own breast,
 By sweet complacencies from virtue felt ?
 Why whispers *nature* lies on virtue's part ?
 Or if blind *instinct* (which assumes the name
 Of sacred conscience) plays the fool in man,
 Why *reason* made accomplice in the cheat ?
 Why are the *wisest* loudest in her praise ?
 Can man by *reason's* beam be led astray ?
 Or, at his peril, *imitate his God* ?
 Since virtue sometimes ruins us on earth,
 Or *both* are true, or, man survives the grave.

Or man survives the grave, or own, *Lorenzo*,
 Thy boast supreme, a wild absurdity.
 Dauntless thy spirit ; cowards are thy scorn.
 Grant man *immortal*, and thy scorn is just.
 The man immortal, *rational* brave,

Dares rush on death——because he cannot die.
 But if man loses all, when life is lost,
 He lives a coward, or a fool expires.
 A *daring* infidel (and such there are,
 From pride, example, lucre, rage, revenge,
 Or pure heroical defect of thought)
 Of all earth's madmen, most deserves a chain.

When to the grave we follow the renown'd
 For valour, virtue, science, all we love,
 And all we praise; for worth, whose noon-tide beam,
 Enabling us to think in higher stile,
 Mends our ideas of ethereal pow'rs;
 Dream we, that lustre of the *moral* world
 Goes out in stench, and rottenness the close?
 Why was he wise to *know*, and warm to *praise*,
 And strenuous to *transcribe*, in human life,
 The mind ALMIGHTY? could it be, that fate,
 Just when the lineaments began to shine,
 And dawn the DEITY, should snatch the draught,
 With night eternal blot it out, and give
 The skies alarm, lest *angels* too might die?

If human souls, why not angelic too
 Extinguish'd? and a *solitary* GOD,
 O'er ghastly ruin, frowning from his throne?
 Shall we, this moment, gaze on GOD in man?
 The next, lose man for ever in the dust?
 From dust we disengage, or man *mistakes*?
 And there, where least his judgment fears a flaw.
Wisdom, and *worth*, how boldly he commends!
Wisdom, and *worth*, are sacred names: rever'd,
 Where not embrac'd; applauded! deify'd!
 Why not *compassion*'d too? if spirits die,
 Both are calamities, inflicted both,
 To make us but more wretched: *wisdom's* eye

Acute, for what? to spy more miseries;
 And *worth*, so recompens'd, new-points their stings
 Or man surmounts the grave, or gain is loss,
 And *worth* exalted *bumbles* us the more.
 Thou wilt not patronize a scheme that makes
Weakness, and *vice*, the refuge of mankind.

"Has virtue, then, no joys?"—yes, joys *dear bought*,
 Talk ne'er so long, in this imperfect state,
 Virtue, and vice, are at eternal war.
Virtue's a combat; and who fights for nought?
 Or for precarious, or for small reward?
 Who virtue's self-reward so loud resound,
 Would take degrees *angelic* here below,
 And *virtue*, while they compliment, betray,
 By feeble motives, and unfaithful guards;
 The crown, th' *unsfading* crown, her soul inspires;
 'Tis that, and that alone, can countervail
 The *body's* treach'ries, and the *world's* assaults:
 On earth's poor pay, our famish'd virtue dies.
 Truth incontestable! in spite of all
 A BAYLE has preach'd, or a V——e believ'd,

In man the more we dive the more we see
 Heav'n's signet stamping an *immortal* make.
 Dive to the bottom of his soul, the base
 Sustaining all; what find we? *knowledge*, *love*
 As light, and heat, essential to the sun,
 These to the soul. And *why*, if souls expire?
 How little lovely *here*? how little known?
 Small *knowledge* we dig up with endless toil;
 And *love* unfeign'd may purchase perfect hate.
 Why starv'd, on earth, our *angel* appetites;
 While *brutal* are indulg'd their salsome fill?
 Were then capacities *divine* conferr'd,
 As a mock diadem, in savage sport,

Rank insult of our pompous poverty,
Which reaps but pain, from seeming claims so fair?
In future age lyes no redress? and shuts
Eternity the door on our complaint?
If so, for what strange ends were mortals made!
The worst to wallow, and the best to weep:
The man who merits most, must most complain:
Can we conceive a disregard in Heaven,
What the worst perpetrate, or best endure?

This cannot be. To love, and know, in man
Is boundless appetite, and boundless pow'r.
And these demonstrate boundless objects too.
Objects, pow'rs, appetites, Heav'n suits in all;
Nor, *nature* thro'g, e'er violates this sweet,
Eternal concord, on her tuneful string.
Is *man* the sole exception from her laws?
Eternity struck off from human hope,
(I speak with truth, and veneration too)
Man is a monster, the reproach of Heav'n,
A stain, a dark impenetrable cloud
On nature's beauteous aspect; and deforms,
(Amazing blot!) deforms her with her lord.
If such is man's allotment, what is heav'n?
Or own the soul *immortal*, or blaspheme.

Or own the soul *immortal*, or invert
All order. Go, mock majesty! go, man!
And bow to thy superiors of the stall;
Thro' every scene of *sense* superior far!
They graze the turf untill'd; they drink the stream
Unbrew'd, and ever full, and unembitter'd
With doubts, fears, fruitless hopes, regrets, despairs;
Mankind's peculiar! *reason's* precious dower!
No foreign clime they ransack for their robes;
Nor bother cite to the litigious bar:

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Their good is good entire, unmixt, unmar'd;
 They find a paradise in ev'ry field,
 On boughs *forbidden* where no curses hang:
 Their *ill*, no more than strikes the sense; unstretcht
 By previous dread, or murmur in the rear:
 When the *worst* comes, it comes unfear'd; one stroke
 Begins, and ends, their woe: they die but *once*;
 Blest, incommunicable privilege! for which
 Proud man, who rules the globe, and reads the stars,
 Philosopher, or hero, sighs in vain.

Account for this prerogative in brutes.
 No day, no glimpse of day, to solve the knot,
 But what beams on it from *eternity*.
 O sole and sweet solution! that unties
 The difficult, and softens the severe;
 The cloud on *nature's* beauteous face dispels;
 Restores bright *order*; casts the brute beneath;
 And re-inthrones us in supremacy
 Of joy, ev'n *here*: admit immortal life,
 And virtue is *knight-errantry* no more;
 Each *virtue* brings in hand a golden dower,
 Far richer in reversion: *hope* exults;
 And tho' much bitter in our cup is thrown,
 Predominates, and gives the taste of heaven.

O wherefore is the DEITY so kind?
 Astonishing beyond astonishment!
 Heav'n our reward—for heav'n enjoy'd below

Still unsubdu'd thy stubborn heart? for *there*
 The traitor lurks, who doubts the truth I sing.
Reason is guiltless; *will* alone rebels.
 What, in that stubborn heart, if I should find
 New, unexpected witnesses against thee?
Ambition, *pleasure*, and the love of gain
 Canst thou suspect, that *these*, which make the soul

The *slave* of earth, should own her heir of heaven?
 Canst thou suspect what makes us *disbelieve*
 Our immortality, should prove it *sure*?

First, then, *ambition* summon to the bar,
 Ambition's *shame*, *extravagance*, *disgust*,
 And *inextinguishable nature*, speak.
 Each much *deposes*; hear them in their turn.

Thy soul, how passionately fond of *fame*!
 How anxious that fond passion to conceal!
 We blush, detected in designs on praise,
 Tho' for best deeds, and from the best of men;
 And why? because *immortal*. Art divine
 Has made the body tutor to the soul;
 Heav'n kindly gives our blood a *moral* flow;
 Bids it ascend the glowing cheek, and there
 Upbraid that little heart's inglorious aim,
 Which stoops to court a character from man;
 While o'er us, in tremendous judgment, sit
 Far more than man, with *endless* praise, and blame.

Ambition's *boundless appetite* out-speaks
 The verdict of its *shame*. When souls take fire
 At high presumptions of their own desert,
 One age is poor applause; the mighty shout,
 The thunder by the living *few* begun,
 Late time must echo; worlds unborn, resound.
 We wish our names *eternally* to live:
 Wild dream! which ne'er had haunted human thought,
 Had not our natures been *eternal* too.
Instinct points out an int'rest in hereafter;
 But our blind *reason* sees not where it lyes;
 Or, seeing, gives the substance for the shade.

Fame is the shade of immortality,
 And in itself a shadow. Soon as caught,
 Contemn'd; it shrinks to nothing in the grasp.

Consult th' ambitious, 'tis ambition's cure.
 "And is this all?" cry'd *Caesar* at his height,
Disgusted. This *third* proof ambition brings
 Of immortality. The first in fame,
 Observe him near, your envy will abate:
 Sham'd at the disproportion vast, between
 The passion, and the purchase, he will sigh
 At such success, and blush at his renown.
 And why? because far richer prize invites
 His heart; far more illustrious glory calls;
 It calls in whispers, yet the deafest hear.

And can ambition a *fourth* proof supply?
 It can, and stronger than the former three;
 Yet quite o'erlook'd by some *reputed* wise.
 Tho' disappointments in ambition pain,
 And tho' success *disgusts*, yet still, *Lorenzo*!
 In vain we strive to pluck it from our hearts;
 By nature planted for the noblest ends.
 Absurd the fam'd advice to *Pyrrhus* giv'n,
 More prais'd than ponder'd; specious, but unsound:
 Sooner that hero's sword the world had quell'd,
 Than reason, his ambition. — Man must soar.
 An obstinate activity within,
 An insuppressible spring, will toss him up
 In spite of *fortune's* load. Not kings alone
 Each villager has his ambition too;
 No *Sultan* prouder than his fetter'd slave:
 Slaves build their little *Babylons* of straw,
 Echo the proud *Assyrian*, in their hearts,
 And cry, — "Behold the wonders of my might!"
 And why? because *immortal* as their Lord;
 And souls immortal must for ever heave
 At something great; the glitter, or the gold;
 The praise of mortals, or the praise of heav'n.

Nor absolutely vain is *human* praise,
 When human is supported by *divine*.
 I'll introduce *Lorenzo* to himself;
Pleasure and *pride* (bad masters!) share our hearts,
 As love of pleasure is ordain'd to guard
 And feed our bodies, and extend our race;
 The love of *praise* is planted to protect
 And propagate the glories of the mind.
 What is it, but the love of praise, inspires,
 Matures, refines, embellishes, exalts,
 Earth's happiness? from *that*, the delicate,
 The grand, the marvellous, of *civil* life.
Want and *convenience*, under workers, lay
 The basis, on which *love of glory* builds.
 Nor is *thy* life, O *virtue*! less in debt
 To praise, thy secret-stimulating friend.
 Were man not *proud*, what merit should we miss?
Pride made the virtues of the pagan-world.
 Praise is the salt that seasons *right* to man,
 And whets his appetite for *moral* good.
 Thirst of applause is virtue's *second* guard;
Reason, her first; but reason wants an aid;
 Our *private* reason is a flatterer;
 Thirst of applause calls *public* judgment in,
 To poise our own, to keep an even scale,
 And give endanger'd virtue fairer play.
 Here a *fifth* proof arises, stronger still:
 Why this so nice construction of our hearts?
 These delicate moralities of *sense*;
 This *constitutional* reserve of aid
 To succour virtue, when our *reason* fails;
 If virtue, kept alive by care and toil,
 And, oft, the mark of injuries on earth,
 When labour'd to maturity (its bill

Of disciplines, and pains, unpaid) must die?
 Why freighted rich, to dash against a rock?
 Were man to perish when most fit to live,
 O how mis-spent were all these stratagems,
 By skill divine inwoven in our frame?
 Where are heav'n's holiness and mercy fled
 Laughs Heav'n, at once, at virtue, and at man?
 If not, why *that* discourag'd, *this* destroy'd?

Thus far, *ambition*. What says *avarices*?
 This *her* chief maxim, which has long been *thine*.

"The wise and wealthy are the same." — I grant it,
 To store up treasure, with incessant toil;
 This is man's province, *this* his highest praise,
 To this great end keen *instinct* stings him on,
 To guide that instinct, *reason*! is thy charge;
 'Tis thine to tell us where *true* treasure lyes:
 But, *reason* failing to discharge her trust,
 Or to the deaf discharging it in vain,
 A blunder follows; and blind *industry*,
 Gall'd by the spur, but stranger to the course,
 (The course where stakes of more than gold are won)
 O'erloading, with the cares of distant age,
 The jaded spirits of the *present* hour,
 Provides for an *eternity* below.

"Thou shalt not covet," is a wise command;
 But bounded to the wealth the sun surveys
 Look farther, the command stands quite revers'd,
 And *av'rice* is a virtue most divine:
 Is *faith* a refuge for our *happiness*?
 Most sure: and is it not for *reason* too?
 Nothing *this* world unriddles, but the *next*.
 Whence inextinguishable thirst of gain
 From inextinguishable life in man:
 Man, if not meant, by worth, to reach the *skies*,

Had wanted wing to fly so far in *guilt*.
 Sour grapes, I grant, *ambition*, *avarice*;
 Yet still their root is *immortality*.
 These its wild growths so bitter, and so base,
 (Pain, and reproach!) *religion* can reclaim,
 Refine, exalt, throw down their pois'nous lee,
 And make them sparkle in the bowl of *bliss*.

See, the *third witness* laughs at bliss remote,
 And falsely promises an *Eden* here:
 Truth she shall speak for once, tho' prone to lie,
 A common cheat, and *pleasure* is her name.
 To pleasure never was *Lorenzo* deaf;
 Then hear her now, now *first* thy *real* friend.

Since nature made us not more fond than *proud*
 Of happiness (whence hypocrites in joy!
 Makers of mirth! artificers of smiles!)
 Why should the joy most poignant *sense* affords,
 Burn us with blushes, and rebuke our pride?—
 Those heav'n-born blushes tell us man *descends*,
 Even in the zenith of his *earthly* bliss:
 Should *reason* take her infidel repose,
 This honest *instinct* speaks our lineage high;
 This instinct calls on darkness to conceal
 Our rapturous relation to the stalls.
 Our *glory* covers us with noble *shame*,
 And he that's unconfounded, is *unman'd*.
 The man that blushes, is not quite a brute.
 Thus far with thee, *Lorenzo*! will I close,
Pleasure is good, and man for pleasure made;
 But pleasure full of glory as of joy;
 Pleasure, which neither *blushes*, nor *expires*.

The witnesses are heard; the cause is o'er;
 Let *conscience* file the sentence in her court,
 Dearer than *deeds* that half a realm convey;

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Thus seal'd by truth, th' authentic record runs.

- “ Know, all ; know, infidels,——unapt to know !
 “ ’Tis *immortality* your nature solves ;
 “ ’Tis *immortality* decyphers man,
 “ And opens all the myst’ries of his make ;
 “ Without it, half his *instincts* are a riddle ;
 “ Without it, all his *virtues* are a dream.
 “ His very *crimes* attest his dignity ;
 “ His fateless thirst of *pleasure, gold, and fame,*
 “ Declares him born for blessings *infinite* :
 “ What less than infinite, makes un-aburd
 “ *Passions*, which all on earth but more inflames ?
 “ Fierce passions, so mis-measur’d to *this scene,*
 “ Stretch’d out, like eagles wings, beyond our nest,
 “ Far, far beyond the worth of all below,
 “ For *earth* too large, presage a nobler flight,
 “ And evidence our title to the *skies.*”

Ye gentle theologues, of calmer kind !
 Whose constitution dictates to your pen !
 Who, cold yourselves, think andor comes from hell !
 Think not our passions from *corruption* sprung,
 Tho’ to corruption now they lend their wings ;
 That is their *mistress*, not their mother. All
 (And justly) *reason* deem divine : I see,
 I feel a grandeur in the *passions* too,
 Which speaks their high descent, and glorious end ;
 Which speaks them rays of an eternal fire.
 In paradise itself they burnt as strong,
 Ere *Adam* fell ; tho’ wiser in their aim,
 Like the proud *eastern*, struck by Providence,
 What tho’ our *passions* are run mad, and stoop
 With low, terrestrial appetite, to graze
 On trash, on toys, dethron’d from high desire ?
 Yet still, thro’ their disgrace, no feeble ray

Of greatness shines, and tells us whence they fell:
But *these* (like that fall'n monarch when reclaim'd)
When *reason* moderates the rein aright,
Shall re-ascend, remount their former sphere,
Where once they soar'd illustrious; ere seduc'd
By wanton *Eve's* debauch, to stroll on earth,
And set the sublunary world on fire.

But grant their phrensy lasts; their phrensy fails
To disappoint *one* providential end,
For which Heav'n blew up ardor in our hearts:
Were *reason* silent, boundless *passion* speaks
A future scene of boundless *objects* too,
And brings glad tidings of *eternal* day.
Eternal day! 'tis that enlightens all;
And all, by that enlighten'd, proves it *sure*.
Consider man as an *immortal* being,
Intelligible all; and all is great;
A crystalline transparency prevails,
And strikes full lustre thro' the human sphere:
Consider man as *mortal*, all is dark,
And wretched; *reason* weeps at the survey.

The learn'd *Lorenzo* cries, "And let her weep,
" Weak, *modern* reason: *ancient* times were wise,
" *Authority*, that venerable guide,
" Stands on my part; the fam'd *Athenian* porch
" (And who for wisdom so renown'd as they?)
" Deny'd this immortality to man."
I grant it; but affirm, they *prov'd* it too.
A riddle this! — have patience, I'll explain.

What noble vanities, what moral flights,
Gilt'ring thro' their romantic wisdom's page,
Make us, at once, despise them, and admire?
Fable is flat to these high-season'd fires;
They leave th' extravagance of song below.

"Flesh shall not feel; or, feeling, shall enjoy
 "The dagger, or the rack; to them, alike
 A bed of roses, or the burning bull."
 In men exploding all beyond the grave,
 Strange doctrine, this! as *doctrine*, it was strange;
 But not, as *prophecy*; for such it prov'd,
 And, to their own amazement, was fulfill'd:
 They feign'd a firmness *Christians* need not feign.
 The *Christian* truly triumph'd in the flame:
 The *Stoic* saw, in double wonder lost,
 Wonder at them, and wonder at himself,
 To find the bold adventures of his thought
 Not bold, and that he strove to lie in vain. (that flew
 Whence, then, those thoughts? those tow'ring thoughts,
 Such monstrous heights? — from *instinct*, and from
 The glorious *instinct* of a deathless soul, (pride.)
 Confus'dly conscious of her dignity,
 Suggested truths they could not understand.
 In *lust's* dominion, and in *passion's* storm,
 Truth's system broken, scatter'd fragments lay,
 As light in chaos, glimm'ring thro' the gloom:
 Smit with the pomp of lofty sentiments,
 Pleas'd *pride* proclaim'd, what *reason* disbeliev'd.
Pride, like the *Delphic* priestess, with a swell,
 Rav'd nonsense, destin'd to be *future* sense,
 When life *immortal*, in full day, should shine;
 And *death's* dark shadows fly the gospel sun.
 They spoke, what nothing but *immortal* souls
 Could speak; and thus the truth they question'd, prov'd.

Can then *absurdities*, as well as *crimes*,
 Speak man *immortal*? all things speak him so.
 Much has been urg'd; and dost thou call for more?
 Call; and with endless questions be distress'd,
 All unresolvable, if *earth* is all.

- " Why life, a moment ? infinite, desire ?
 " Our wish, eternity ? our home, the grave ?
 " Heav'n's *promise* dormant lyes in human *hope*.
 " Who *wishes* life immortal, *proves* it too.
 " Why happiness pursu'd, tho' never found ?
 " Man's thirst of happiness declares *it is*,
 " (For nature never gravitates to nought) ;
 " That thirst unquench'd declares *it is not here*.
 " My *Lucia*, thy *Clarissa*, call to thought ;
 " Why *cordial friendship* riveted so deep,
 " As hearts to pierce at first, at parting, rend,
 " If friend, and friendship, vanish in an hour ?
 " Is not this torment in the mask of joy ?
 " Why by *reflection* marr'd the joys of *sense* ?
 " Why *past*, and *future*, preying on our hearts,
 " And putting all our *present* joys to death ?
 " Why labours *reason* ? *instinct* were as well ;
 " Instinct, far better ; what can *chuse*, can *err* :
 " O how *infallible* the thoughtless brute !
 " 'Twere well his *Holiness* were half as sure.
 " *Reason* with *inclination*, why at war ?
 " Why *sense* of *guilt* ? why *conscience* up in arms ?"

Conscience of guilt, is prophecy of pain,
 And bosom-council to decline the blow.
 Reason with inclination ne'er had jarr'd,
 If nothing future paid forbearance here.
 Thus on——these, and a thousand pleas uncall'd,
 All *promise*, some *ensure*, a second scene ;
 Which, were it *doubtful*, would be dearer far
 Than all things else most *certain* : were it *false*,
 What *truth* on earth so precious as the lie ?
 This world it gives us, let what will ensue ;
 This world it gives, in that high cordial, *hope* :
 The future of the present is the soul :

How *this* life groans, when sever'd from the *next*?
 Poor, mutilated wretch, that disbelieves!
 By dark distrust his being cut in two,
 In *both* parts perishes; life void of joy,
 Sad prelude of eternity in pain!

Couldst thou persuade me, the next life could fail
 Our ardent wishes; how should I pour out
 My bleeding heart in anguish, *new*, as deep!
 Oh! with what thoughts, thy *hope*, and my *despair*,
 Abhor'd ANNIHILATION! blasts the soul,
 And wide-extends the bounds of human woe!
 Could I believe *Lorenzo's* system true,
 In *this* black channel would my ravings run.

" Grief from the *future* borrow'd peace, ere-while;
 " The future *vanisht*! and the present *pain'd*!
 " Strange import of unprecedented ill!
 " Fall, how profound! like *Lucifer's*, the fall!
 " Unequal fate! his fall, without his guilt!
 " From where fond *hope* built her pavilion high
 " The gods among, hurl'd headlong, hurl'd at once
 " To night! to nothing! darker still than night.
 " If 'twas a dream, why wake me, my worst foe,
 " *Lorenzo*! boastful of the name of friend!
 " O for delusion! O for error still!
 " Could vengeance strike much stronger than to plant
 " A *thinking* being in a world like this,
 " Not over-rich before, now beggar'd quite;
 " More curst than at the *fall*?—the sun goes out!
 " The thorn shoots up! what thorns in ev'ry thought?
 " Why sense of better? it imbitters worse.
 " Why sense? why life? if but to sigh, then sink
 " To what I was? *twice* nothing! and much woe!
 " Woe from Heav'n's bounties! woe, from what was
 " To flatter most, high *intellectual* pow'rs.

- " *Thought, virtue, knowledge!* blessings, by *thy* scheme,
 " All poison'd into pains. First, *knowledge*, once
 " My soul's ambition, *now* her greatest dread.
 " To *know myself*, true wisdom?—no, to shun
 " That shocking science. Parent of despair!
 " Avert thy mirror: if I see, I die.
 " *Know my Creator!* climb his blest abode
 " By painful speculation, pierce the veil,
 " Dive in his nature, read his attributes,
 " And gaze in admiration——on a *foe*,
 " Obtruding life, withholding happiness!
 " From the full rivers that surround his throne,
 " Not letting fall one drop of joy on man;
 " Man gasping for one drop, that he might cease
 " To curse his birth, nor envy *reptiles* more!
 " Ye sable clouds! ye darkest shades of night!
 " Hide *him*, for ever hide him, from my thought,
 " Once all my comfort; source, and soul of joy!
 " Now leagu'd with furies, and with *thee*, against me.
 " *Know his achievements!* study his renown!
 " Contemplate this amazing universe,
 " Dropt from his hand, with miracles replete!
 " For what? 'mid miracles of nobler name,
 " To find one miracle of *misery*?
 " To find the being, which alone can *know*
 " And *praise* his works, a blemish on his praise?
 " Thro' nature's ample range, in thought, to strolc
 " And start at *man*, the single mourner there,
 " Breathing high hope! chain'd down to pangs, and
 death!
 " Knowing is suff'ring: and shall *virtue* share
 " The sigh of *knowledge*? *virtue* shares the sigh.
 " By straining up the steep of *excellent*,
 " By battles fought, and from *temptation*, won,

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- " What gains she, but the pang of seeing worth,
 " *Angelic* worth, soon, shuffled in the dark
 " With every vice, and swept to *brutal* dust ?
 " Merit is madness ; virtue is a crime ;
 " A crime to *reason*, if it cost us pain
 " *Unpaid* : what pain, amidst a thousand more,
 " To think the most *abandon'd*, after days
 " Of triumph o'er their betters, find in death
 " As soft a pillow, nor make fouler clay !
 " *Duty ! religion !*—these, our duty done,
 " Imply reward. *Religion* is mistake.
 " *Duty !*—there's none, but to repel the cheat.
 " Ye cheats ! away ! ye daughters of my pride !
 " Who feign yourselves the fav'rites of the skies :
 " Ye tow'ring hopes ! abortive energies !
 " That toss, and struggle in my *lying* breast,
 " To scale the skies, and build presumption there,
 " As I were heir of an *eternity*.
 " Vain, vain ambitions ! trouble me no more.
 " Why travel far in quest of sure defeat ?
 " As bounded as my being, be my wish.
 " All is inverted, wisdom is a fool.
 " *Sense !* take the rein ; blind *passion !* drive us on ;
 " And, *ignorance !* befriend us on our way ;
 " Ye *new*, but *truest* patrons of our peace !
 " Yes ; give the *pulse* full empire ; live the *brute*,
 " Since, as the brute, we die. The sum of man,
 " Of godlike man ! to *revel*, and to *rot*.
 " But not on equal terms with *other* brutes :
 " *Their* revels a more poignant relish yield,
 " And safer too ; *they* never poisons chuse.
 " *Instinct*, than *reason*, makes more wholesome meals,
 " And sends all marring murmur far away.
 " For *sensual* life *they* best philosophize ;

- " *Theirs*, that *serene*, the *sages* sought in vain :
 " 'Tis *man* alone expostulates with heav'n ;
 " *His*, all the *pow'r*, and all the *cause*, to mourn.
 " Shall *human* eyes alone dissolve in tears ?
 " And, bleed, in anguish, none but *human* hearts ?
 " The wide stretcht realm of *intellectual* woe,
 " Surpassing *sensual* far, is all our own.
 " In *life* so fatally distinguisht, why
 " Cast in one lot, confounded, lump'd, in *death* ?
 " Ere yet in being, was mankind in guilt ?
 " Why thunder'd this peculiar *clause* against us,
 " *All mortal*, and *all wretched* !——have the skies
 " Reasons of state, their subjects may not scan,
 " Nor *humbly* reason, when they *forely* sigh ?
 " *All-mortal*, and *all-wretched* !——'tis too much ;
 " Unparallel'd in nature : 'tis too much
 " On being *unrequested* at thy hands,
 " *Omnipotent* ! for I see nought but *pow'r*.
 " And why see that ! why *thought* ? to toil, and eat
 " Then make our bed in darkness, needs no thought.
 " What superfluities are *reas'ning* souls !
 " Oh give eternity ! or thought destroy.
 " But without thought our curse were half unfelt ;
 " Its blunted edge would spare the throbbing heart,
 " And, *therefore*, 'tis bestow'd. I thank thee, *reason* !
 " For aiding *life's* too small calamities,
 " And giving being to the dread of *death*.
 " *Such* are thy bounties !——was it then too much
 " For *me*, to trespass on the brutal rights ?
 " Too much for *heav'n* to make one enmity more ?
 " Too much for *chaos* to permit my mass
 " A longer stay with essences unwrought,
 " Unfashion'd, untormented into *man* ?
 " Wretched preferment to this round of pains !

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- " Wretched capacity of frenzy, *thought* !
 " Wretched capacity of dying, *life* !
 " *Life, thought, worth, wisdom*, all (O soul revolt !)
 " Once friends to peace, gone over to the foe.
 " *Death*, then, has chang'd its nature too : O death !
 " Come to my bosom, thou best gift of heav'n !
 " Best friend of man ! since man is man no more.
 " Why in this thorny *wilderness* so long,
 " Since there's no *promis'd land's* ambrosial bow'r,
 " To pay me with its honey for my stings ?
 " If needful to the selfish schemes of heav'n
 " To sting us sore, why mockt our misery ?
 " Why this so sumptuous insult o'er our heads ?
 " Why this illustrious canopy display'd ?
 " Why so magnificently lodg'd *despair* ?
 " At stated periods, sure-returning, roll
 " These *glorious orbs*, that mortals may compute
 " Their length of labours, and of pains ; nor lose
 " Their misery's full measure?-----Smiles with flowers,
 " And fruits, promiscuous, ever-teeming *earth*,
 " That man may languish in *luxurious* scenes,
 " And in an *Eden* mourn his wither'd joys ?
 " Claim earth and skies man's admiration, due
 " For *such* delights ! blest *animals* ! too wise
 " To wonder ; and too happy to complain !
 " Our doom decreed demands a mournful scene :
 " Why not a dungeon dark, for the *condemn'd* ?
 " Why not the dragon's subterranean den,
 " For man to howl in ? why not his abode
 " Of the same dismal colour with his fate ?
 " A *Thebes*, a *Babylon*, at vast expence
 " Of time, toil, treasure, art, for owls and adders,
 " As congruous, as, for man, this lofty dome,
 " Which prompts proud thought, and kindles high desire ;

" If, from her humble chamber in the dust,
 " While proud thought swells, and high desire inflames,
 " The poor *worm* calls us for her inmates *there*;
 " And, round us, *death's* inexorable hand
 " Draws the dark curtain close; undrawn no more.
 " Undrawn no more!-----behind the cloud of *death*,
 " Once, I beheld a sun; a sun which gilt
 " That sable cloud, and turn'd it all to gold:
 " How the *grave's* alter'd! fathomless, as hell!
 " A *real* hell to those who dreamt of heav'n.
 " ANNIHILATION! how it yawns before me!
 " Next moment I may drop from *thought*, from *sense*,
 " The privilege of *angels*, and of *worms*,
 " An outcast from existence! and this spirit,
 " This all-pervading, this all-conscious soul,
 " This particle of energy divine,
 " Which travels nature, flies from star to star,
 " And visits gods, and emulates their pow'rs,
 " For ever is extinguisht. Horror! death!
 " Death of *that* death I *fearless*, once survey'd!----
 " When horror *universal* shall descend,
 " And heav'n's dark concave urn all human race,
 " On that enormous, unrefunding tomb,
 " How just this verse! this monumental sigh!"

*Beneath the lumber of demolisht worlds,
 Deep in the rubbish of the gen'ral wreck,
 Swept ignominious to the common mass
 Of matter, never dignify'd with life,
 Here lye proud rationals; the sons of heav'n!
 The lords of earth! the property of worms!
 Beings of yesterday, and no to-morrow!
 Who liv'd in terror, and in pangs expir'd!
 All gone to rot in chaos; or to make*

Their happy transit into blocks, or brutes,
Nor longer fully their CREATOR'S name.
 Lorenzo! hear, pause, ponder, and pronounce,
 Just is this history? if such is man,
 Mankind's historian, tho' divine, might weep.
 And darest Lorenzo smile?—I know thee proud;
 For once let *pride* befriend thee: *pride* looks pale
 At such a scene, and sighs for something more.
 Amid thy boasts, presumptions, and displays,
 And art thou then a shadow? less than shade?
 A nothing? less than nothing? to have been,
 And *not to be*, is lower than unborn.
 Art thou *ambitious*? why then make the worm
 Thine equal? Runs thy taste of *pleasure* high?
 Why patronize sure death of ev'ry joy?
 Charm *riches*? why chuse begg'ry in the grave,
 Of ev'ry hope a bankrupt? and for ever!
Ambition, pleasure, avarice, persuade thee
 To make that world of glory, rapture, wealth,
 They * lately prov'd, thy soul's supreme desire.

What art thou made of? rather, how unmade?
 Great *nature's* master-appetite destroy'd!
 Is endless life, and happiness, despis'd?
 Or both wist, *here*, where neither can be found?
 Such man's perverse, eternal war with heav'n!
 Darst thou persist? and is there nought on earth,
 But a long train of transitory forms,
 Rising, and breaking, millions in an hour?
 Bubbles of a fantastic deity, blown up
 In sport, and then in cruelty destroy'd?
 Oh! for what crime, unmerciful Lorenzo!
 Destroys thy scheme the *whole* of human race?
 Kind is fell *Lucifer*, compar'd to thee:

Oh ! spare this waste of being half divine ;
And vindicate th' oeconomy of heav'n.

Heav'n is all love ; all joy in giving joy :
It never had created, but to bless :
And shall it, then, strike off the list of life,
A being blest, or worthy *so* to be ?
Heav'n starts at an *annihilating* God.

Is that all *nature* starts at thy desire ?
Art such a clod to wish thyself *all* clay ?
What is that dreadful wish ?——the dying groan
Of *nature*, murder'd by the blackest guilt.
What deadly poison has thy nature drank ?
To nature undebaucht no shock so great ;
Nature's *first* wish is *endless happiness* ;
Annihilation is an after-thought,
A monstrous wish, unborn till virtue dies.
And Oh ! what depth of horror lyes inclos'd !
For non-existence no man ever wish'd,
But first, he wish'd the DEITY destroy'd.

If so ; what words are dark enough to draw
Thy picture true ? the darkest are too fair.
Beneath what baleful planet, in what hour
Of desperation, by what fury's aid,
In what infernal posture of the soul,
All hell invited, and all hell in joy,
At such a birth, a birth so near of kin,
Did thy foul *fancy* whelp so black a scheme
Of *hopes* abortive, *faculties* half-blown,
And *deities* begun, reduc'd to dust ?

There's nought (thou sayst) but one eternal flux
Of feeble essences, tumultuous driven
Thro' *time's* rough billows into *night's* abyss.
Say, in this rapid *tide* of human ruin,
Is there no rock, on which man's tossing thought

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Can rest from terror, dare his fate survey,
 And boldly think it *something* to be born?
 Amid such hourly wrecks of being fair,
 Is there no central, all-sustaining Base,
 All-realizing, all-connecting pow'r,
 Which, as it call'd forth all things, can recall,
 And force *destruction* to refund her spoil?
 Command the grave, restore her taken prey?
 Bid death's dark vale its human harvest yield,
 And *earth*, and *ocean*, pay their debt of man,
 True to the grand deposit trusted there?
 Is there no potentate, whose out-stretch'd arm,
 When rip'ning time calls forth th' appointed hour,
 Pluckt from foul *devastation's* famisht maw,
 Binds *present*, *past*, and *future*, to his throne?
 His throne, how glorious, thus divinely grac'd,
 By germinating beings elust ring round!
 A garland worthy the Divinity!
 A throne, by Heav'n's omnipotence in smiles,
 Built (like a *Pharos*, tow'ring in the waves),
 Amidst immense effusions of his love!
 An ocean of *communicated* blifs!

An all-prolific, all-preserving GOD!
This were a GOD indeed.—And such *is* man,
 As here presum'd: he rises from his fall.
 Think'st thou Omnipotence a naked root,
 Each blossom fair of DEITY destroy'd?
 Nothing is dead; nay, nothing sleeps; each soul,
 That ever animated human clay,
 Now wakes; is on the wing: and where, O where,
 Will the swarm settle?—when the *trumpet's* call,
 As sounding brass, collects us, round heav'n's throne
 Conglob'd, we bask in everlasting day,
 (Paternal splendor!) and adhere for ever.

Had not the soul this outlet to the skies,
In this vast vessel of the universe,
How should we gasp, as in an empty void!
How in the pangs of famisht *hope* expire!

How bright *this* prospect shines! how gloomy *thine*!
A trembling world! and a devouring God!
Earth, but the shambles of omnipotence!
Heav'n's face all stain'd with causeless massacres
Of countless millions, born to feel the pang
Of being *lost*. *Lorenzo*! can it be?
This bids us shudder at the thoughts of *life*.

Who would be born to such a phantom world,
Where nought substantial, but our misery?
Where joy (if joy) but heightens our distress,
So soon to perish, and revive no more?
The greater *such* a joy, the *more* it pains.
A world, where dark, mysterious vanity
Of *good*, and *ill*, the distant colours blends,
Confounds all *reason*, and all *hope* destroys;
Reason, and *hope*, our sole asylum *here*!
A world, so far from *great* (and yet how great
It shines to thee!) there's nothing *real* in it;
Being, a shadow! *consciousness*, a dream!
A dream, how dreadful! universal blank
Before it, and behind! poor man, a spark
From non-existence struck by wrath divine,
Glitt'ring a moment, not that moment sure,
'Midst upper, nether, and surrounding *night*,
His sad, sure, sudden, and eternal tomb!

Lorenzo! dost thou *feel* these arguments?
Or is there nought but *vengeance* can be felt?
How hast thou dar'd the DEITY dethrone?
How dar'd indict him of a world like this?
If *such* the world, creation was a crime;

For what is crime, but cause of misery ?
 Retract, Blasphemer ! and unriddle *this*,
 Of endless arguments *above, below,*
Without us, and within, the short result——

“ *If man's immortal, there's a G O D in heav'n.* ”

But wherefore such redundancy, such waste
 Of argument ? one sets *my* soul at rest ;
 One obvious, and at hand, and, Oh !——at heart.
 So just the skies, *Philander's* life so pain'd,
 His heart so pure ; *that*, or *succeeding* scenes
 Have palms to give, or ne'er had he been born.

“ *What an old tale is this !* ” Lorenzo cries.——
 I grant this argument is old ; but truth
 No years impair ; and had not this been true,
 Thou never hadst despis'd it for its age.
Truth is immortal as thy soul ; and *fable*
 As fleeting as thy joys : be wise, nor make
 Heav'n's highest blessing, vengeance ; O be wise !
 Nor make a curse of *immortality*.

Say, know'st thou what *it* is ? or what *thou* art ?
 Know'st thou th' *importance* of a soul immortal ?
 Behold this midnight glory ; worlds on worlds !
 Amazing pomp ! redouble this amaze ;
 Ten thousand add ; add twice ten thousand more ;
 Then weigh the whole ; *one* soul outweighs them all ;
 And calls th' astonishing magnificence
 Of *unintelligent* creation poor.

For this, believe not *me* ; no *man* believe ;
 Trust not in words, but deeds ; and deeds no less
 Than those of the SUPREME ; nor his, a few ;
 Consult them all ; consulted, all proclaim
 Thy soul's importance : tremble at thy self ;
 For whom *Omnipotence* has wak'd so long :
 Has wak'd, and work'd, for ages ; from the birth

Of nature to this *unbelieving* hour.

In this small province of his vast domain
 (All *nature* bow, while I pronounce his name !)
 What has God done, and not for *this* sole end,
 To rescue souls from death ? the *soul's high price*
 Is writ in all the conduct of the skies.
 The *soul's high price* is the *creation's key*,
 Unlocks its mysteries, and naked lays
 The genuine cause of ev'ry deed divine :
 That is the *chain of ages*, which maintains
 Their obvious correspondence, and unites
 Most distant periods in one blest design :
 That is the *mighty hinge*, on which have turn'd
 All revolutions, whether we regard
 The *nat'ral, civil, or religious*, world ;
 The former two, but servants to the third :
 To that their duty done, they both expire,
 Their *mas's* new-cast, forgot their *deeds renown'd* ;
 And angels ask, " *Where once they shone so fair ?*"
 To lift us from *this* abject, to sublime ;
 This flux, to permanent ; this dark, to day ;
 This foul, to pure ; this turbid, to serene ;
 This mean, to mighty !——for *this* glorious end
 Th' ALMIGHTY, rising, his long Sabbath broke ;
 The world was made ; was ruin'd ; was restor'd ;
 Laws from the *skies* were publish'd ; were repeal'd ;
 On *earth* kings, kingdoms, rose ; kings, kingdoms, fell ;
 Fam'd sages lighted up the *Pagan* world ;
 Prophets from *Sion* darted a keen glance
 Thro' distant age ; saints travell'd ; martyrs bled ;
 By wonders sacred nature stood controul'd ;
 The living were translated ; dead were rais'd ;
 Angels, and *more* than angels, came from heav'n ;
 And, Oh ! for *this*, descended lower still ;

Guilt was hell's gloom ; astonisht at his guest,
 For one short moment *Lucifer* ador'd :
Lorenzo! and wilt thou do less?—for *this*,
 That *hallow'd page*, fools scoff at, was inspir'd,
 Of all these truths thrice-venerable code !
Deists! perform your quarentine ; and then,
 Fall prostrate, ere you touch, lest you die.

Nor less intensely bent *infernal* powers
 To mar, than those of *light*, *this* end to gain.
 O what a scene is here !—*Lorenzo!* wake ;
 Rise to the thought ; exert, expand, thy soul
 To take the vast idea : it denies
 All *else* the name of great. Two warring worlds !
 Not *Europe* against *Afric* ; warring worlds,
 Of *more* than mortal ! mounted on the wing !
 On ardent wings of energy, and zeal,
 High-hov'ring o'er this little brand of strife !
 This sublunary ball-----but strife, for what ?
 In their own cause conflicting ? no ; in *thine*,
 In *man's*. His *single* int'rest blows the flame ;
 His the sole stake ; his fate the trumpet sounds,
 Which kindles war immortal. How it burns !
 Tumultuous swarms of deities in arms !
 Force force opposing, till the waves run high,
 And tempest nature's universal sphere.
 Such opposites eternal, stedfast, stern,
 Such foes implacable, are *good* and *ill* ;
 Yet man, vain man, would mediate peace between them.
 Think not this fiction. "*There was war in heaven.*"
 From heav'n's high crystal mountain were it hung,
 Th' ALMIGHTY's outstretcht arm took down his bow :
 And shot his indignation at the *deep* :
 Rethunder'd *hell*, and darted all her fires.-----
 And seems the stake of little moment still ?

And slumbers *man*, who singly caus'd the storm?
He sleeps.----And art thou shockt at mysteries?
The greatest, thou. How dreadful to reflect,
What ardor, care, and counsel, *mortal's* cause
In breasts divine! how little in their own!

Where-e'er I turn, how new *proofs* pour upon me!
How happily this wond'rous view supports
My former argument! how strongly *strikes*
Immortal life's full demonstration, *here*?
Why this exertion? why this strange regard
From heav'n's Omnipotent indulg'd to man?
Because, in man, the glorious, dreadful pow'r,
Extremely to be pain'd, or blest, for *ever*.
Duration gives importance; swells the price.
An angel, if a creature of a day,
What would he be? a trifle of no weight;
Or stand, or fall; no matter which; he's gone.
Because IMMORTAL, therefore is indulg'd
This strange regard of deities to dust.
Hence, heav'n looks down on earth, with all her eyes:
Hence, the soul's mighty moment in her sight:
Hence, ev'ry soul has partisans above,
And ev'ry thought a critic in the skies:
Hence, clay, vile clay! has angels for its guard,
And ev'ry guard a passion for his charge:
Hence, from all age, the cabinet divine
Has held high counsel o'er the fate of man.

Nor have the clouds those gracious counsels hid.
Angels undrew the curtain of the throne,
And PROVIDENCE came forth to meet mankind;
In various modes of emphasis, and awe,
He spoke his will, and trembling *nature* heard;
He spoke it loud, in thunder, and in storm.
Witness, thou *Sinai*! whose cloud cover'd height,

And shaken basis, own'd the present God :
 Witness, ye *billows* ! whose returning tide,
 Breaking the chain that fasten'd it in air,
 Swept *Egypt*, and her menaces, to hell :
 Witness, ye *flames* ! th' *Assyrian* tyrant blew
 To sev'n-fold rage, as impotent, as strong :
 And thou, *earth* ! witness, whose expanding jaws
 Clos'd o'er * *presumption's* sacrilegious sons :
 Has not each element, in turn, subscrib'd
 The *soul's* high price, and sworn it to the wife ?
 Has not flame, ocean, ether, earthquake, strove
 To strike *this truth*, thro' adamantin man ?
 If not all-adamant, *Lorenzo* ! hear ;
 All is delusion, *nature* is wrapt up,
 In tenfold night, from *reason's* keenest eye ;
 There's no consistence, meaning, plan, or end,
 In all beneath the sun, in all above,
 (As far as man can penetrate) or heav'n
 Is an immense, inestimable prize ;
 Or all is nothing, or that prize is all.—
 And shall each *toy* be still a match for heav'n ?
 And full equivalent for groans below ?
 Who would not give a trifle to prevent
 What he would give a thousand worlds to cure ?

Lorenzo ! thou hast seen (if thine, to see)
 All *nature*, and her God (by *nature's* course,
 And *nature's* course controul'd) declare for me :
 The skies above proclaim " *immortal* man !"
 And, " man *immortal* !" all below resounds.
 The world's a system of theology,
 Read, by the greatest strangers to the schools ;
 If *honest*, learn'd ; and *sages* o'er a plough.
 Is not, *Lorenzo* ! then, impos'd on thee
 This hard alternative ; or, to renounce

Thy reason, and thy sense; or, to believe?
 What then is *unbelief*? 'tis an exploit;
 A strenuous enterprize; to gain, it man
 Must burst thro' ev'ry bar of common sense,
 Of common shame, magnanimously wrong;
 And what rewards the sturdy combatant?
 His prize, *repentance*; *insanity*, his crown.

But wherefore, *infamy*? — for want of *worth*
 Down the steep precipice of *wrong* he slides;
 There's nothing to support him in the *right*.
Faith in the future wanting, is, at least
 In *embryo*, ev'ry weakness, ev'ry guilt;
 And strong temptation ripens it to *birth*.
 If *this* life's gain invites him to the deed,
 Why not his country sold, his father slain?
 'Tis virtue to pursue our good supreme;
 And his supreme, his *only* good is *here*.
Ambition, *av'rice*, by the wise disdain'd,
 Is perfect *wisdom*, while mankind are *fools*,
 And think a turf, or tomb-stone, covers all;
These find employment, and provide for *sense*,
 A richer pasture, and a larger range;
 And *sense* by right divine ascends the throne,
 When *reason's* prize and prospect are no more;
Virtue no more we think the will of heav'n.
 Would heav'n quite *beggar* virtue, if belov'd?

“Has *virtue* charms?” — I grant her heavenly fair;
 But if unportion'd; all will *int'rest* wed;
 Tho' that our admiration, *this* our choice.
 The virtues grow on *immortality*;
 That root destroy'd, they wither and expire.
 A DEITY believ'd, will nought avail;
 Rewards and punishments make God ador'd;
 And hopes and fears give conscience all her pow'r.

As in the dying parent dies the child,
Virtue, with *immortality*, expires.
 Who tells me he denies his soul immortal,
 Whate'er his boast, has told me, *he's a knave*.
 His *duty* 'tis, to love himself *alone*;
 Nor care tho' mankind perish, if he smiles.
 Who thinks ere-long the man shall *wholly* die,
 Is dead already; nought but *brute* survives.

And are there such?—such candidates there are
 For *more* than death; for utter loss of being;
 Being, the basis of the *DEITY*!
 Ask you the *cause*?—the cause they will not tell;
 Nor *need* they: Oh the sorceries of *sense*!
 They work this transformation on the soul,
 Dismount her like the serpent at the fall,
 Dismount her from her native wing—(which soar'd
 Ere-while ethereal heights) and throw her down,
 To lick the dust, and crawl, in such a thought.

Is it in words to paint you? O ye fall'n!
 Fall'n from the wings of *reason*, and of *hope*!
 Erect in stature, prone in appetite!
 Patrons of pleasure, posting into pain!
 Lovers of argument, averse to sense!
 Boasters of liberty, fast-bound in chains!
 Lords of the wide creation, and the shame!
 More *senseless* than th' *irrationals* you scorn!
 More *base* than those you rule! than these you pity
 Far more *undone*! O ye most infamous
 Of beings, from superior dignity!
 Deepest in woe from means of boundless bliss!
 Ye curst by blessings infinite; because
 Most highly favour'd, most profoundly lost!
 Ye motly-mass of *contradiction* strong!
 And are you, too, convinc'd, your souls fly off

In exhalation soft, and die in air,
From the full flood of evidence *against* you?
In the coarse drudgeries, and sinks of *sense*,
Your souls have quite worn out the make of heav'n;
By vice new-cast, and creatures of your own;
But tho' you can *deform*, you can't *destroy*;
To *curse*, not *uncreate*, is all your pow'r.

Lorenzo! this black brotherhood renounce;
Renounce *St. Evremont*, and read *St. Paul*.
Ere rapt by miracle, by *reason* wing'd
His mounting mind made long abode in heav'n;
This is freethinking, unconfin'd to parts,
To send the soul, on curious travel bent,
Thro' all the provinces of human thought,
To dart her flight, thro' the whole sphere of man;
Of this vast universe to make the tour;
In each recess of *space*, and *time*, at home;
Familiar with their wonders; diving deep;
And, like a prince of boundless int'rests *there*,
Still most ambitious of the most remote;
To look on *truth* unbroken, and entire;
Truth in the *system*, the full orb; where truths
By truths enlighten'd, and sustain'd, afford
An arch-like, strong foundation, to support
Th' incumbent weight of absolute, complete
Conviction; here, the more we press, we stand
More firm; who most *examine* most *believe*.
Parts, like half-sentences, confound; the *whole*
Conveys the sense, and God is understood;
Who not in *fragments* writes to human race;
Read his *whole* volume, sceptic! then reply.

This, this, is thinking-free, a thought that grasps
Beyond a grain, and looks beyond an hour.
Turn up thine eye, survey this midnight scene;

What are earth's kingdoms, to yon boundless orbs,
Of human souls, one day, the destin'd range?
And what yon boundless orbs, to godlike man?
Those numerous worlds that throng the firmament,
And ask more space in heav'n, can rowl at large
In man's capacious thought, and still leave room,
For ampler orbs; for new creations, there.

Can such a soul contract itself, to gripe
A point of no dimension, of no weight?
It can; it does: the world is such a point,
And, of that point, how small a part enslaves?

How small a part—of nothing, shall I say?
Why not?—friends, our chief treasure! how they drop!
EUGIA, NARCISSE fair, PHILANDER, gone!

The *grave*, like fabled *Cerberus*, has op'd
A triple mouth; and, in an awful voice,
Loud calls my soul, and utters all I sing.

How the world falls to pieces round about us,
And leaves us in a ruin of our joy!

What says this transportation of my friends?
It bids me love the place where now they dwell;

And from this wretched spot, they leave so poor
Eternity's vast ocean lies before thee;

There, there, LORENZO! thy CLARISSA sails.
Give thy mind sea-room; keep it wide of earth,

That rock of souls immortal; cut thy cord;
Weigh anchor; spread thy sails; call ev'ry wind;

Eye the great pole-star; make the land of life.

Two kinds of life has double-natur'd man,
And two of death; the last far more severe.

Life *animal* is nurtur'd by the sun,
Thinks on his bounties, triumphs in his beams.

Life *rational* subsists on higher food,
Triumphant in his beams, who made the day.

When we leave *that* fun, and are left by *this*,
 (The fate of all who die in stubborn guilt)
 'Tis utter darkness; strictly *double* death.
 We sink by no *judicial* stroke of heav'n,
 But nature's *course*; as sure as plumbets fall:
 Since GOD, or man, must alter, ere they meet,
 For light and darkness blend not in one sphere)
 'Tis manifest, LORENZO! *who* must change.

If, then, that *double death* should prove thy lot,
 Blame not the bowels of the DEITY;
 Man shall be blest, as far as man *permits*.
 Not man alone, all *rational*s, heav'n arms
 With an illustrious, but tremendous pow'r
 To counter-act its own most gracious ends;
 And this, of strict necessity, not choice;
 That pow'r deny'd, *men, angels*, were no more
 But passive engines, void of praise, or blame.
 A nature *rational* implies the pow'r
 Of being blest, or wretched, as we please:
 Else idle *reason* would have nought to do;
 And he that would be barr'd: capacity
 Of pain, courts in capacity of bliss.
 Heav'n *wills* our happiness, *allows* our doom;
 Invites us ardently, but not *compels*;
 Heav'n but *persuades*, almighty man *decrees*;
 Man is the maker of immortal fates:
 Man falls by man, if finally he falls;
 And fall he *must*, who learns from *death* alone
 The dreadful secret,--that he *lives* for ever.

Why *this* to thee? thee yet, perhaps, in doubt
 Of second life? but wherefore doubtful still?
 Eternal life is nature's ardent wish;
 What ardently we wish, we *soon* believe:
 Thy *tardy* faith declares that wish destroy'd:

What has destroy'd it?—shall I tell thee, what?

When *fear'd the future*, 'tis no longer wight;

And, when unwight, we *strive* to disbelieve.

"*Thus infidelity our guilt betrays.*"

Nor that the *sole* detection? blush, LORENZO!

Blush for hypocrisy, if not for guilt.

The *future fear'd*? an infidel, and fear!

Fear what? a *dream*? a *fable*?—how thy dread,

Unwilling evidence, and therefore *strong*,

Affords my cause an undesign'd support!

How *disbelief* affirms, what it denies!

"*It, unawares, asserts immortal life.*"—

Surprising! *infidelity* turns out

A *creed*, and a *confession of our sins*:

Apostates, *thus*, are orthodox divines.

LORENZO! with LORENZO clash no more;

Nor longer a *transparent* vizard wear.

Think'st thou, RELIGION *only* has her mask?

Our infidels are *Satan's* hypocrites,

Pretend the worst, and, at the bottom, *fail*.

When visited by thought (*thought will intrude*)

Like him they serve, they *tremble*, and *believe*.

Is there hypocrisy so foul as this?

So fatal to the welfare of the world?

What *detestation*, what *contempt*, their due?

And, if unpaid, be thank'd for their escape

That Christian candor they *strive* hard to scorn.

If not for that *asylum*, they might find

A hell on *earth*; nor 'scape a worse *below*.

With insolence, and impotence of thought,

Instead of racking fancy, to *refute*,

Reform thy manners, and the truth *enjoy*.—

But shall I dare confess the dire result?

Can thy proud *reason* brook so black a brand?

From purer manners, to sublimer faith,
Is nature's unavoidable ascent;
An honest deist, where the gospel shines,
Matur'd to nobler, in the *Christian* ends.
When that blest change arrives, e'en cast aside
This song superfluous; *life immortal* strikes
Conviction, in a flood of light *divine*.
A *Christian* dwells, like * *URIEL*, in the sun;
Meridian evidence puts *doubt* to flight;
And ardent *hope* anticipates the skies.
Of that bright sun, *LORENZO*! scale the sphere;
'Tis easy; it invites thee; it descends
From heav'n to woo, and waft thee whence it came;
Read and revere the *sacred page*, a page
Where triumphs *immortality*; a page
Which not the whole *creation* could produce;
Which not the *conflagration* shall destroy;
In nature's ruins not one letter lost;
'Tis printed in the mind of gods for ever.

In proud disdain of what e'en gods adore,
Dost smile? --- poor wretch! thy guardian angel weeps.
Angels, and *men*, assent to what I sing;
Wits smile, and thank me for my *midnight dream*.
How vicious hearts fume phrensy to the brain?
Parts push us on to pride, and pride to shame;
Pert *infidelity* is *wit's* cockade,
To grace the brazen brow that braves the skies,
By *loss of being*, dreadfully secure.
LORENZO! if thy doctrine wins the day,
And drives my dreams, defeated, from the field;
If *this* is all, if earth a *final scene*,
Take heed; stand fast; be sure to be a *knave*:
A knave in grain! ne'er deviate to the *right*:
Shouldst thou be *good* --- how infinite thy loss!

Guilt only makes *annihilation* gain.

Blest scheme ! which life deprives of *comfort*, death
Of *hope* ; and which *vice* only recommends.

If so ; *where*, infidels ! your bait thrown out
To catch weak converts ? *where* your lofty boast
Of zeal for *virtue*, and of love to *man* ?

ANNIHILATION ! I confess, in *these*.

What can *reclaim* you ? dare I hope profound
Philosophers the converts of a *song* ?

Yet know, *its* * *title* flatters you, not *me*.

Yours be the praise to make *my* title good ;

Mine to bless heav'n, and triumph in *your* praise.

But since so pestilential your disease,

Though sov'reign is the med'cine I prescribe,

As yet, I'll neither triumph, nor despair :

But hope, ere-long, my *midnight dream* will wake

Your hearts, and teach your wisdom—to be wise :

For why should souls immortal, made for bliss,

Ere wish (with and wish in vain !) that souls could die ?

What ne'er can die, Oh ! grant to *live* ; and crown

The wish, and aim, and labour of the skies ;

Increase, and enter on the joys of heav'n :

Thus shall my title pass a *sacred* seal,

Receive an *imprimatur* from above,

While angels shout----an *infidel* reclaim'd !

To close, LORENZO ! spite of all my pains,

Still seems it strange, that thou shouldst live *for ever* !

Is it *less* strange, that thou shouldst live *at all* ?

This is a miracle ; and that no more.

Who gave beginning, can exclude an end.

Deny thou *art* : then, doubt if thou *shalt be*.

A miracle with miracles inclos'd,

Is man : and starts his faith at what is *strange* ?

* The infidel reclaim'd.

What less than wonders, from the *Wonderful*;
 What less than miracles, from God, can flow?
Admit a GOD----that mystery supreme!
 That cause uncaus'd! all other wonders cease;
 Nothing is marvellous for *him* to do:
Deny him----all is mystery besides;
 Millions of mysteries! each darker far,
 Than *that* thy wisdom would, unwisely, shun.
 If *weak* thy faith, why chuse the harder side?
 We nothing *know*, but what is marvellous;
 Yet what is marvellous, we can't *believe*.

So weak our *reason*, and so great our God,
 What most surprizes in the *sacred page*,
 Or full as strange, or stranger *must* be true.
Faith is not *reason's* labour, but repose:

To *faith*, and *virtue*, why so backward, *man*?
 From hence:----the *present* strongly strikes us all;
 The *future*, faintly: can we, then, be *men*?
 If men, LORENZO! the *reverse* is right:
Reason is man's peculiar; *sense*, the brute's.
 The *present* is the scanty realm of *sense*;
 The *future* *reason's* empire unconfin'd;
 On *that* expending all her godlike pow'r,
 She plans, provides, expatiates, triumphs, *there*;
 There, builds her *blessings*; there expects her *praise*;
 And nothing asks of *fortune*, or of *men*?
 And what is *reason*? be she thus defin'd;
Reason is *upright stature* in the *soul*.
 Oh! be a *man*; and strive to be a *god*.

“ For what? (thou sayst :) to damp the joys of life?”
 No; to give *heart* and *substance* to thy joys.
 That tyrant, *hope*; mark, how she domineers;
 She bids us quit realities, for dreams;
 Safety and peace, for hazard, and alarm;

That tyrant o'er the tyrants of the soul,
 She bids *ambition* quit its taken prize,
 Spurn the luxuriant branch on which it sits,
 Tho' bearing crowns, to spring at *distant* game;
 And plunge in toils; and dangers---for repose.
 If *hope* precarious, and of things, when gain'd,
 Of little moment, and as little stay,
 Can sweeten toils and dangers into joys;
 What then, *that* hope, which nothing can defeat,
 Our leave unask'd? rich hope of boundless bliss!
 Bliss, past *man's* pow'r to paint it; *time's*, to close!

This hope is earth's most estimable prize:
This is man's portion, while no more than man:
Hope, of all passions most befriends us *here*;
 Passions of prouder name befriend us less.
Joy has her *tears*; and *transports* has her *death*:
Hope, like a cordial, innocent tho' strong,
 Man's heart, at once, *inspirits* and *serenes*,
 Nor makes him pay his wisdom for his joys;
 'Tis all our present state can *safely* bear,
 Health to the frame! and vigour to the mind!
 And to the modest eye *chastis'd* delight!
 Like the fair summer-ev'ning, mild, and sweet!
 'Tis man's full cup; his paradise below!

A blest hereafter, *then*, or hop'd, or gain'd,
 Is all;----our *whole* of happiness: full proof,
 I chose no trivial or inglorious *theme*.
 And know, ye foes to song! (well-meaning men,
 Tho' quite forgotten * half your *Bible's* praise!)
Important truths, in spite of *verse*, may please:
 Grave minds you praise; nor can you praise too much;
 If there is weight in an ETERNITY
 Let the *grave* listen;---and be *graver* still.

* The poetical parts of it.

NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY.

NIGHT THE EIGHTH.

VIRTUE'S APOLOGY:

OR,

The MAN of the WORLD answered.

In which are considered,

The LOVE of this LIFE;

*The AMBITION and PLEASURE, with the WIT and
WISDOM, of the WORLD.*



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NIGHT THE EIGHTH

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NIGHT THE EIGHTH.
VIRTUE'S APOLOGY.

O R,

The MAN of the WORLD answered.

AND has all nature, then, espous'd my part?
Have I brib'd heav'n, and earth, to plead against
And is thy soul *immortal*?—what remains? (thee?
All, all, LORENZO!—make immortal, blest.
Unblest immortals!—what can shock us more?
And yet, LORENZO still affects *the world*;
There, stows his treasure; thence, his title draws,
Man of the world! (for such wouldst thou be call'd)
And art thou proud of that inglorious stile?
Proud of reproach? for a reproach it *was*,
In antient days; and CHRISTIAN,—in an age,
When men were men, and not ashamed of heav'n,
Fir'd their ambition, as it crown'd their joy.
Sprinkled with dews from the *Castalian* font,
Iain would I re-baptize thee, and confer
A purer spirit, and a nobler name.

Thy fond attachments fatal, and inflam'd,
Point out my path, and dictate to my song:
To thee, *the world* how fair! how strongly strikes
Ambition! and gay pleasure stronger still!
Thy triple bane! the triple bolt, that lays
Thy virtue dead! be *these* my triple theme;
Nor shall thy *wit*, or *wisdom*, be forgot.

Common the theme; not so the song; if she
My song invokes, *URANIA*, deigns to smile.
The charm that chains us to the world, her foe,

If she dissolves, *the man of earth*, at once,
Starts from his trance, and sighs for other scenes;
Scenes, where these sparks of night, these *stars*, shall
Unnumber'd suns (for all things, as they are, (shine
The blest behold;) and, in one glory, pour
Their blended blaze on man's astonisht sight;
A blaze,----the least illustrious object there.

LORENZO! since *eternal* is at hand,
To swallow *time's* ambitions; as the vast
Leviathan, the bubbles vain, that ride
High on the foaming billow; what avail
High titles, high descent, attainments high,
If unattain'd our *highest*? O LORENZO!
What lofty thoughts, these elements above,
What tow'ring hopes, what fallies from the sun,
What grand surveys of destiny divine,
And pompous preface of unfathom'd fate,
Should roll in bosoms, where a spirit burns,
Bound for eternity! in bosoms read
By *him*, who soibles in archangels' sees!
On human hearts *He* bends a jealous eye,
And marks, and in heav'n's register enrolls,
The rise, and progress, of each option there;
Sacred to doomsday! *that* the page unfolds,
And spreads us to the gaze of gods and men.

And what an option, O LORENZO! thine?
This world! and this, unrival'd by the skies!
A world, where lust of *pleasure*, *grandeur*, *gold*,
Three *demons* that divide its realms between them,
With strokes alternate buffet to and fro
Man's restless heart, their sport, their flying ball;
Till, with the giddy circle, sick and tir'd,
It pants for peace, and drops into despair.
Such is the world LORENZO sets above.

That glorious *promise* angels were esteem'd
Too mean to bring ; a promise, their ador'd
Descended to communicate, and press,
By counsel, miracle, life, death, on man.

Such is the world LORENZO's wisdom woos,
And on its thorny pillow seeks repose ;
A pillow, which, like opiates ill-prepar'd,
Intoxicates, but not composes ; fills
The visionary mind with gay chimeras,
All the wild trash of sleep, without the rest ;
What unfeign'd travel, and what dreams of joy !

How frail, men, things ! how momentary, both !
Fantastic chace, of shadows hunting shades !
The gay, the busy, equal, tho' unlike ;
Equal in wisdom, differently wise !
Through flow'ry meadows, and through dreary wastes ;
One bustling, and one dancing, into death.
There's not a day, but, to the man of thought,
Betrays some secret, that throws new reproach
On life, and makes him sick of seeing more.
The scenes of *business* tell us----" what are men ;"
The scenes of *pleasure*----" what is all beside ;"
There others we despise ; and here, ourselves.
Amid *disgust* eternal, dwells delight ?
'Tis *approbation* strikes the string of joy.

What wondrous prize has kindled this career,
Stuns with the din, and choaks us with the dust,
On life's gay stage, one inch above the grave ?
The proud ran up and down in quest of eyes ;
The sensual in pursuit of something worse ;
The grave, of gold ; the politic, of power ;
And all, of other butterflies, as vain !
As eddies draw things frivolous, and light,
How is man's heart by *vanity* drawn in ;

On the swift circle of returning toys,
Whirl'd, straw-like, round and round, and then ingulph'd ?
Where gay delusion darkens to despair !

" *This is a beaten track.*"----Is this a track
Should *not* be beaten ? never beat enough,
Till enough learnt the truths it would inspire.
Shall truth be silent, because folly frowns ?
Turn the world's history ; what we find there,
But *fortune's* sports, or *nature's* cruel claims,
Or *woman's* artifice, or *man's* revenge,
And endless inhumanities on man ?
Fame's trumpet seldom sounds, but, like the knell,
It brings bad tidings : how it hourly blows
Man's misadventures round the list'ning world !
Man is the tale of narrative old time ;
Sad tale ! which high as *Paradise* begins ;
As if, the toil of travel to delude,
From stage to stage, in his eternal round,
The *days*, his daughters, as they spin our hours
On *fortune's* wheel, where accident unthought
Of, in a moment, snaps life's strongest thread,
Each, in her turn, some tragic story tells,
With, now and then, a wretched farce between ;
And fills his chronicle with human woes,

Time's daughters, true as those of men, deceive us ;
Not one, but puts some cheat on all mankind ;
While in their father's bosom, not yet ours,
They flatter our fond hopes ; and promise much
Of amiable ; but hold him not o'er-wise,
Who dares to trust them ; and laugh round the year,
At still confiding, still-confounded, man,
Confiding, though confounded ; hoping on,
Untaught by trial, unconvinc'd by proof,
And ever looking for the never seen.

Life to the last, like harden'd felons, lies ;
Nor owns itself a cheat, till it expires.
Its little joys go out by one and one,
And leave poor man, at length, in perfect night ;
Night darker, than what, *now*, involves the pole.

O THOU, who dost permit these ills to fall,
For gracious ends, and wouldst, that man should mourn ?
O THOU, whose hand this goodly fabric fram'd,
Who know'st it best, and wouldst that man should know !
What is this sublunary world ? a vapour ;
A vapour all it holds ; itself, a vapour ;
From the damp bed of chaos, by thy beam
Exhal'd, ordain'd to swim its destin'd hour
In ambient air, then melt, and disappear.
Earth's days are number'd, nor remote her doom ;
As mortal, tho' less transient, than her sons ;
Yet they doat on her, as the world and they
Were both eternal, solid ; THOU, a dream.

They doat, on what ? *immortal* views apart,
A region of outsidcs ! a land of shadows !
A fruitful field of flow'ry promises !
A wilderness for joys ! perplex'd with doubts,
And sharp with thorns ! a troubled *ocean*, spread
With bold adventurers, their *all* on board ;
No second hope, if here their fortune frowns ;
Frown soon it *must*. Of various rates they sail,
Of ensigns various ; all alike in this,
All restless, anxious ; tost with hopes, and fears,
In calmest skies ; obnoxious all to storm ;
And stormy the most gen'ral blast of life :
All bound for happiness ; yet few provide
The chart of *knowledge*, pointing where it lyes ;
Or *virtue's* helm, to shape the course design'd :
All, more or less, capricious fate lament,

212 THE COMPLAINT,

Now lifted by the tide, and now reſorb'd,
 And farther from their wiſhes than before :
All, more or leſs, againſt each other daſh,
 To mutual hurt, by guſts of paſſion driven,
 And ſuff'ring more from folly, than from fate.

Ocean ! thou dreadful, and tumultuous home
 Of dangers, at eternal war with man !
 Death's capital, where moſt he domineers,
 With all his choſen terrors frowning round,
 (Tho' lately feaſted high at * *Albion's* coſt)
 Wide-op'ning, and loud-roaring ſtill for more !
 Too faithful mirror ! how doſt thou reflect
 The melancholy face of human life !
 The ſtrong reſemblance tempts me farther ſtill :
 And, haply, *Britain* may be deeper ſtruck
 By *moral truth*, in ſuch a mirror ſeen,
 Which nature holds for ever at her eye.

Self-flatter'd, unexperienc'd, high in hope,
 When young, with ſanguine chear, and ſtreamers gay,
 We cut our cable, launch into the world,
 And fondly dream each wind and ſtar our friend ;
 All, in ſome darling enterprize embarkt :
 But where is he can fathom its event ?
 Amid a multitude of artleſs hands,
 Ruin's ſure perquiſite ! her lawful prize !
 Some ſteer aright ; but the black blaſt blows hard,
 And puſhs them wide of hope : with hearts of proof,
 Full againſt wind, and tide, *ſome* win their way ;
 And when ſtrong effort has deſerv'd the port,
 And tugg'd it into view, 'tis won ! 'tis loſt !
 Tho' ſtrong their oar, ſtill ſtronger is their fate :
 They ſtrike ; and while they triumph, they expire,
 In ſtreſs of weather, *moſt* ; *ſome* ſink outright ;

O'er them, and o'er their names, the billows close;
 To-morrow knows not they were ever born.
 Others a short memorial leave behind,
 Like a flag floating, when the bark's ingulph'd;
 It floats a moment, and is seen no more:
 One CAESAR lives; a thousand are forgot.
 How few, beneath auspicious planets born,
 (Darlings of providence! fond fate's elect!
 With swelling sails make good the promis'd port,
 With all their wishes freighted! yet even these,
 Freight with all their wishes, soon complain;
 Free from misfortune, not from nature free,
 They still are men; and when is man secure?
 As fatal *time*, as *storm*! the rush of years
 Beats down their strength; their numberless escapes
 In ruin end: and, now, their proud success
 But plants *new* terrors on the victor's brow:
 What pain to quit the world, just made their own,
 Their nest so deeply down'd, and built so high!
 Too low they build, who build beneath the stars.

Woe then apart, (if woe apart can be
 From mortal man) and fortune at our nod,
 The gay! rich! great! triumphant! and august!
 What are they?—the *most* happy (strange to say!)
 Convince *me* most of human misery:
 What are they? smiling wretches of *to-morrow*!
 More wretched, *then*, than e'er their slave can be;
 Their treach'rous blessings, at the day of need,
 Like other faithless friends, unmask, and sting:
Then, what provoking indigence in wealth!
 What aggravated impotence in pow'r!
 High titles, *then*, what insult of their pain!
 If that sole anchor, equal to the waves,
Immortal hope! defies not the rude storm,

Takes comfort from the foaming billow's rage,
And makes a welcome harbour of the tomb.

This is a *sketch*, of what thy soul admires :

" But here (thou sayst) the miseries of life

" Are huddled in a group. A more distinct

" Survey, perhaps, might bring thee better news."

Look on life's stages ; they speak plainer still ;

The plainer they, the deeper wilt thou sigh.

Look on thy lovely boy ; in him behold

The best that can befall the best on earth ;

The boy has virtue by his *mother's* side :

Yes, on FLORELLO look ; a *father's* heart

Is tender, tho' the *man's* is made of stone ;

The truth, through such a medium seen, may make

Impression deep, and fondness prove thy friend.

FLORELLO lately cast on this rude coast

A helpless infant ; now a heedless child ;

To poor CLARISSA'S throes, thy care succeeds ;

Care full of love, and yet severe as hate !

O'er thy soul's joy how oft thy fondness frowns !

Needful austerities his will restrain ;

As thorns fence in the tender plant from harm.

As yet, his *reason* cannot go alone ;

But asks a sterner nurse to lead it on.

His little heart is often terrify'd ;

The blush of morning, in his cheek, turns pale :

Its pearly dew-drop trembles in his eye ;

His harmless eye ! and drowns an angel there.

Ah ! what avails his innocence ? the task

Enjoin'd, must discipline his early pow'rs ;

He learns to sigh, ere he is known to sin ;

Guiltless, and sad ! a wretch before the fall !

How cruel this ; more cruel to forbear.

Our nature such, with *necessary* pains,

We purchase prospects of *precarious* peace :
Tho' not a *father*, this might steal a sigh.

Suppose him disciplin'd aright (if not,
'Twill sink our poor account to poorer still ;
Ripe from the tutor, proud of liberty,
He leaps inclosure, bounds into the world ;
The world is taken, after ten years toil,
Like antient *Troy* ; and all its joys his own.
Alas ! the world's a tutor more severe ;
Its lessons hard, and ill deserve his pains ;
Unteaching all his virtuous nature taught,
Or books (fair virtue's advocates !) inspir'd.

For who receives him into public life ?
Men of the world, the terrae-filial breed,
Welcome the modest stranger to their sphere,
(Which glitter'd long, at distance, in his sight)
And, in their hospitable arms, inclose :
Men, who think nought so strong of the romance,
So rank knight-errant, as a real friend :
Men, that act up to *reason's* golden rule,
All weakness of *affection* quite subdu'd :
Men, that would blush at being *thought* sincere,
And feign, for glory, the *few* faults they want ;
That love a lie, where truth would pay as well ;
As if, to them, *vice* shone her own reward.

Lorenzo ! canst thou bear a shocking sight ?
Such, for *Florello's* sake, 'twill now appear :
See, the steel'd files of season'd veterans,
Train'd to the world, in burnisht falshood bright ;
Deep in the fatal stratagems of peace ;
All soft sensation, in the throng, rubb'd off ;
All their keen purpose, in politeness, sheath'd ;
His friends eternal—during interest ;
His foes implacable—when worth their while ;

At war with ev'ry welfare, but their own;
 As wise as *Lucifer*; and half as good;
 And by whom, none, but *Lucifer*, can gain—
 Naked, through these (so common fate ordains)
 Naked of heart, his cruel course he runs,
 Stung out of all, most amiable in life,
 Prompt truth, and open thought, and smiles unfeign'd;
 Affection, as his species, wide-diffus'd;
 Noble presumptions to mankind's renown;
 Ingenuous trust, and confidence of love.

These claims to joy (if mortals joy might claim)
 Will cost him many a sigh; till time, and pains,
 From the slow mistress of this school, *experience*,
 And her assistant, pausing, pale, *distrust*,
 Purchase a dear-bought clue to lead his youth,
 Through serpentine obliquities of life,
 And the dark labyrinth of human hearts!
 And happy! if the clue shall come so cheap;
 For, while we learn to fence with public guilt,
 Full oft we feel its foul contagion too,
 If less than heav'nly virtue is our guard.
 Thus, a strange kind of curst necessity
 Brings down the sterling temper of his soul,
 By base alloy, to bear the current stamp,
Below call'd wisdom; sinks him into safety;
 And brands him into credit with the world;
 Where specious titles dignify disgrace,
 And nature's injuries are arts of life;
 Where brighter reason prompts to bolder crimes;
 And heav'nly talents make infernal hearts;
 That unfurmoutable extreme of guilt!

Poor *Machiavel*! who labour'd hard his plan,
 Forgot, that genius needs not go to school;
 Forgot, that man, without a tutor-wife,

His plan had practis'd, long before 'twas writ.
The world's all *title-page*, there's no *contents*;
The world's all *face*; the man who shews his *heart*,
Is whooted for his nudities, and scorn'd.

A man I knew, who liv'd upon a smile;
And well it fed him; he look'd plump and fair;
While rankest venom foam'd thro' ev'ry vein.

Lorenzo! what I tell thee, take not ill!

Living, he fawn'd on ev'ry fool alive;
And, dying, curs'd the *friend* on whom he liv'd.
To such proficients thou art half a saint.

In foreign realms (for thou hast travell'd far)

How curious to contemplate two state-rooks,

Studious their nests to feather in a trice,

With all the *necromantics* of their art,

Playing the game of *faces* on each other,

Making court-sweet-meats of their latent gall,

In foolish hope, to steal each other's trust;

Both cheating, both exulting, both deceiv'd;

And, sometimes, both (let earth rejoice) undone!

Their parts we doubt not; but be that their shame;

Shall men of talents, fit to rule mankind,

Stoop to mean wiles, that would disgrace a fool?

And lose the thanks of those few friends they serve?

For who can thank the man, he cannot *see*?

Why so much cover? it defeats itself.

Ye, that know all things! know ye not, mens hearts

Are therefore known, *because* they are conceal'd?

For why conceal'd?—the cause they need not tell.

I give him joy, that's aukward at a lie;

Whose feeble nature *truth* keeps still in awe;

His incapacity is his renown.

'Tis great, 'tis manly, to disdain *disguise*;

It shews our spirit, or it proves our strength.

Thou sayst, 'tis *needful*: is it therefore right?
 Howe'er I grant it some small sign of grace,
 To strain at an excuse: and wouldst thou then
 Escape that cruel *need*? thou mayst, with ease;
 Think no post *needful* that demands a knave.
 When late our civil helm was shifting hands,
 So *P*——thought: think better, if you can.

But this, how rare! the public path of life
 Is dirty:——yet, allow that dirt its due,
 It makes the noble mind more noble still:
 The world's no neuter; it will wound or save;
 Our virtue quench, or indignation fire.
 You say; the world, well-known, will make a *man*:—
 The world, well-known, will give our hearts to heav'n,
 Or make us *demons*, long before we die.

To shew how fair the world, *thy* mistress, shines,
 Take *either* part, sure ills attend the choice;
 Sure, tho' not equal, detriment ensues.
 Not *virtue*-self is deify'd on earth;
Virtue has her relapses, conflicts, foes;
 Foes, that ne'er fail to make her feel their hate.
Virtue has her peculiar set of pains;
 True; friends to virtue, *last*, and *least*, complain;
 But if they sigh, can others hope to smile?
 If *wisdom* has her miseries to mourn,
 How can poor *folly* lead a happy life?
 And if *both* suffer, what has earth to boast,
 Where he *most* happy, who the *least* laments?
 Where *much*, *much* patience, the most envy'd state,
 And *some* forgiveness, needs, the best of friends?
 For friend, or happy life, who looks not higher,
 Of neither shall he find the shadow *here*.

The world's sworn advocate, without a fee,
Lorenzo smartly, with a smile, replies;

“ Thus far thy song is right, and all must own,
 “ Virtue *has her peculiar set of pains*.——
 “ And joys peculiar who to *vice* denies ?
 “ If vice it is, with nature to comply :
 “ If *pride*, and *sense*, are so predominant,
 “ To *check*, not *overcome*, them, makes a saint,
 “ Can nature in a plainer voice proclaim
 “ *Pleasure*, and *glory*, the chief good of man ?”

Can *pride*, and *sensuality*, rejoice ?

From purity of thought, all *pleasure* springs ;
 And, from an humble spirit, all our *peace*.

Ambition, *pleasure* ! let us talk of these :

Of these, the *porch*, and *academy*, talk'd ;

Of these, each following age had much to say ;

Yet unexhausted, still, the needful theme.

Who talks of *these*, to mankind all at once

He talks ; for where the saint from either free ?

Are these thy refuge ?——no ; these rush upon thee ;

Thy vitals seize, and *vultur*-like, devour :

I'll try, if I can pluck thee from thy rock,

Prometheus ! from this barren ball of earth ;

If *reason* can unchain thee, thou art free.

And, first, thy *Caucasus*, ambition calls ;

Mountain of torments ! eminence of woes !

Of courted woes ! and courted through mistake !

'Tis not ambition charms thee ; 'tis a cheat

Will make thee start, as *H*—— at his *Moor*.

Dost grasp at greatness ? first, know what it is :

Thinkst thou thy greatness in *distinction* lyes ?

Not in the feather, wave it e'er so high,

By *fortune* stuck, to mark us from the throng,

Is glory lodg'd : 'tis lodg'd in the reverse ;

In that which joins, in that which equals, all,

The monarch and his slave ;——“ a deathless soul,

220 THE COMPLAINT:

“ Unbounded prospect, and immortal kin,
 “ A father good, and brothers in the skies;
 Elder, indeed, in time; but less remote
 In excellence, perhaps, than thought by man;
 Why greater what can fall, than what can rise?

If still delirious, now, *Lorenzo!* go;
 And with thy full-blown brothers of the *world*,
 Throw scorn around thee; cast it on thy slaves;
 Thy slaves, and equals: how scorn cast on them
 Rebounds on thee! if man is mean, as man,
 Art thou a god? if fortune makes him so,
 Beware the consequence: a maxim that,
 Which draws a monstrous picture of mankind;
 Where, in the drapery, the *man* is lost;
 Externals flutt’ring, and the soul forgot;
 Thy greatest glory when dispos’d to boast,
 Boast *that* aloud, in which thy servants share.

We wisely strip the steed we mean to buy;
 Judge we, in their caparisons, of *men*?
 It nought avails thee, *where*, but *what*, thou art;
 All the distinctions of this little life
 Are quite cutaneous, foreign to the man. (creep;
 When, through death’s freights, *earth’s* subtle serpents
 Which wriggle into wealth, or climb renown,
 As crooked *Satan* the forbidden tree,
 They leave their party-colour’d robe behind,
 All that now glitters, while they rear aloft
 Their brazen crests, and hiss at us below.
 Of fortune’s *fucus* strip them, yet alive;
 Strip them of body, too; nay, closer still,
 Away with all, but *moral*, in their minds;
 And let, what then remains, impose their name,
 Pronounce them weak, or worthy; great or mean.
 How mean that snuff of glory *fortune* lights,

And *death* puts out ! dost thou demand a test,
A test, at once infallible, and short,
Of *real* greatness ? that man greatly lives,
Whate'er his fate, or fame, who greatly dies,
High-flush'd with hope, where heroes shall despair,
If *this* a true criterion, many courts,
Illustrious, might afford but few grandees.

Th' Almighty, from his throne, on earth surveys
Nought greater, than an honest, humble heart ;
An humble heart, *his* residence ! pronounc'd
His second seat ; and rival to the skies.
The private path, the secret acts of men,
If noble, for the noblest of our lives !
How far above *Lorenzo's* glory sits
Th' illustrious master of a name *unknown* ?
Whose worth unrival'd, and unwitness'd, loves
Life's sacred shades, where gods converse with men ;
And *peace*, beyond the world's conception, smiles !
As thou, (now dark) before we part, shall see.

But thy great soul this *skulking* glory scorns.
Lorenzo's sick, but when *Lorenzo's* seen ;
And, when he shrugs at public bus'ness, lyes.
Deny'd the public eye, the public voice,
As if he liv'd on others breath, he dies.
Fain would he make the world his pedestal ;
Mankind, the gazers ; the sole figure, he.
Knows he, that mankind praise against their will,
And mix as much detraction as they can ?
Knows he, that faithless *fame* her whisper has,
As well as trumpet ? that his vanity
Is so much tickled from not hearing *all* ?
Knows this all-knower, that from itch of praise,
Or, from an itch more sordid, when he shines,
Taking his country by five hundred ears,

Senates at once admire him, and despise,
 With modest laughter lining loud applause,
 Which makes the smile more mortal to his fame?
 His *fame*, which (like the mighty *Cæsar*) crown'd
 With laurels, in full senate, greatly falls,
 By *seeming* friends, that honour, and destroy.
 We rise in glory, as we sink in pride:
 Where boasting ends, there dignity begins:
 And yet mistaken, beyond all mistake,
 The blind *Lorenzo's* proud — of being proud;
 And dreams himself ascending in his fall.

An eminence, though fancy'd, turns the brain;
 All vice wants *hellebore*; but, of all vice,
Pride loudest calls, and for the largest bowl;
 Because, all other vice unlike, it flies,
 In fact, the point; in fancy most pursu'd.
 Who court applause, oblige the world in this:
 They gratify man's passion to refuse.
 Superior honour, when assum'd is lost;
 Ev'n good men turn *banditti*, and rejoice,
 Like *Kouli-kan*, in plunder of the proud.

Tho' somewhat disconcerted, steady still
 To the world's cause, with half a face of joy,
Lorenzo cries — "Be, then, *ambition* cast;
 " *Ambition's* dearer far stands unimpeach'd,
 " Gay *pleasure*! proud *ambition* is her slave;
 " For her, he soars at great, and hazards ill;
 " For her, he fights, and bleeds, or overcomes;
 " And paves his way, with crowns to reach her smile;
 " Who can resist her charms?" — or, *should*? *Lorenzo*!
 What mortal shall resist, where angels yield?
Pleasure's the mistress of ethereal pow'rs;
 For her contend the rival gods above:
Pleasure's the mistress of the world below;

And well it is for man, that *pleasure* charms ;
How would all stagnate, but for *pleasure's* ray !
How would the frozen stream of action cease !
What is the pulse of this so busy world ?

The love of *pleasure* : that, thro' ev'ry vein,
Throws motion, warmth ; and shuts out death from life.

Tho' various are the tempers of mankind,
Pleasure's gay family holds all in chains :
Some most affect the black ; and some, the fair ;
Some honest *pleasure* court ; and some, obscene.
Pleasures obscene are various, as the throng
Of passions, that can err in human hearts ;
Mistake their objects, or transgress their bounds.
Think you there's but *one* whoredom ? whoredom, all,
But when our *reason* licenses delight.

Dost doubt, *Lorenzo* ? thou shalt doubt no more.
Thy father chides thy gallantries ; yet hugs
An ugly, common harlot, in the dark.

A rank adulterer with others *gold* ;
And that hag, *vengeance*, in a corner, charms.
Hatred her brothel has, as well as love,
Where horrid *Epicures* debauch in blood.

Whate'er the motive, *pleasure* is the mark ;
For her, the black assassin draws his sword ;
For her, dark statesmen trim their midnight lamp,
To which no *single* sacrifice may fall ;

For her, the saint abstains ; the miser starves ;
The *Stoic* proud, for pleasure, pleasure scorn'd ;

For her, *affliction's* daughters grief indulge,
And find, or hope, a luxury in tears ;

For her, guilt, shame, toil, danger, we defy ;
And, with an aim *voluptuous*, rush on death.

Thus universal her despotic power.

And as her empire wide, her praise is just.

Patron of pleasure! doater on delight!
 I am thy rival; pleasure I profess;
 Pleasure, the purpose of my gloomy song.
Pleasure is nought but virtue's gayer name;
 I wrong her still, I rate her worth too low;
 Virtue the root, and pleasure is the flower;
 And honest *Epicurus*' foes were fools.

But this sounds harsh, and gives the *wise* offence;
 If o'erstrain'd wisdom still retains the name.

How knits *austerity* her cloudy brow,
 And blames, as bold, and hazardous, the *praise*
 Of *pleasure*, to mankind, *unprais'd*, too dear!
 Ye modern *Stoics*! hear my soft reply;
 Their senses men *will* trust: we can't impose;
 Or, if we could, is imposition right?
 Own *honey sweet*; but, owning, add this *sting*:
 "When mixt with poison, it is deadly too."

Truth never was indebted to a lie.

Is nought but *virtue* to be prais'd, as good?
 Why then is health preferr'd before disease?
 What nature love is good, without *our* leave.
 And where no future draw-back cries, "*beware*;"
Pleasure, though not from virtue, *should* prevail.
 'Tis balme to life, and gratitude to Heav'n;
 How cold our thanks for bounties unenjoy'd!
 The *love of pleasure* is man's eldest-born,
 Born in his cradle, living to his tomb;
Wisdom, her younger sister, tho' more grave,
 Was meant to *minister*, and not to mar,
 Imperial *pleasure*, queen of human hearts.

Lorenzo! thou, her majesty's renown'd,
 Tho' uncoift, counsel, learned in the *world*!
 Who thinkst thyself a *Murray*, with disdain
 Mayst look on me. Yet, my *Demosthenes*!

Canst thou plead *pleasure's* cause as well as I ?
 Knowst thou her *nature, purpose, parentage* ?
 Attend my song, and thou shalt know them all ;
 And know thyself ; and know thyself to be
 (Strange truth !) the most abstemious man alive.
 Tell not *Calista* ; she will laugh thee dead ;
 Or send thee to her hermitage with L——.
 Absurd presumption ! thou, who never knewst
 A serious thought ! shalt thou dare dream of joy ?
 No man e'er found a *happy life* by chance,
 Or yawn'd it into being, with a wish ;
 Or, with the snout of grov'ling *appetite*,
 E'er smelt it out, and grubb'd it from the dirt.
 An *art* it is, and must be learnt ; and learnt
 With unremitting effort, or be lost ;
 And leave us perfect blockheads, in our bliss.
 The clouds may drop down titles and estates ;
Wealth may seek us ; but *wisdom* must be sought ;
 Sought before all ; but (how unlike all else
 We seek on earth !) 'tis never sought in vain.

First, *pleasure's* birth, rise, strength, and grandeur see :
 Brought forth by *wisdom*, nurs'd by *discipline*,
 By *patience* taught, by *perseverance* crown'd,
 She rears her head majestic ; round her throne
 Erected in the bosom of the just,
 Each virtue, list'd, forms her manly guard.
 For what are *virtues* ? (formidable name !)
 What, but the fountain, or defence, of joy ?
 Why, then, command ? need mankind commands,
 At once to *merit*, and to *make*, their bliss ?——
 Great legislator ! scarce so great, as kind !
 If men are rational, and love delight,
 Thy gracious law but flatters human choice ;
 In the transgression lyes the penalty ;

And they the most indulge, who most obey.

Of *pleasure*, next, the final cause explore ;
Its mighty *purpose*, its important *end*.

Not to turn *human* brutal, but to build

Divine on human, *pleasure* came from heav'n.

In aid to *reason* was the goddess sent ;

To call up all its strength by such a charm.

Pleasure, first, succours *virtue* ; in return,

Virtue gives *pleasure* an eternal reign.

What, but the pleasure of food, friendship, faith,
Supports life *nat'ral*, *civil*, and *divine* ?

'Tis from the pleasure of repast, we live ;

'Tis from the pleasure of applause we please ;

'Tis from the pleasure of belief, we pray ;

(All pray'r would cease, if unbeliev'd the prize :)

It serves ourselves, our species, and our God ;

And to serve more is past the sphere of man.

Glide, then, for ever, pleasure's sacred stream !

Through *Eden* as *Euphrates* ran, it runs,

And fosters ev'ry growth of happy life ;

Makes a new *Eden* where it flows ;——but such

As *must* be lost, *Lorenzo* ! by thy fall.

“ *What mean I by thy fall ?* ”——thou'lt shortly see,

While pleasure's *nature* is at large display'd ;

Already sung her *origin* and *ends*,

Those glorious ends, by kind or by degree,

When *pleasure* violates, 'tis then a vice,

And vengeance too ; it hastens into pain.

From due refreshment, life, health, reason, joy ;

From wild excess, pain, grief, distraction, death ;

Heav'n's justice *this* proclaims, and *that* her love.

What greater evil can I wish my foe,

Than his full draught of pleasure, from a cask

Unbroach'd by *just* authority, ungaug'd

By *temperance*, by *reason* unrefin'd ?
 A thousand demons lurk within the lee.
 Heav'n, others, and ourselves ! uninjur'd *these*,
 Drink deep ; the deeper, then the more divine ;
 Angels are angels from indulgence *there* ;
 'Tis unrepenting pleasure makes a god.

Dost think thyself a god from other joys ?
 A victim rather ! shortly surely to bleed.
 The wrong *must* mourn : can Heav'n's appointment fail ?
 Can man outwit Omnipotence ? strike out
 A self-wrought happiness unmeant by *him*
 Who made us, and the world we would enjoy ?
 Who forms an instrument, ordains from whence
 Its dissonance, or harmony, shall rise.
 Heav'n bid the soul this mortal frame inspire ;
 Bid virtue's ray divine inspire the soul ;
 With unprecious flows of vital joy ;
 And, without breathing, man as well might hope
 For life, as without piety, for peace.

“ Is *virtue*, then, and *piety* the same ? ”——
 No ; piety is more ; 'tis virtue's source ;
 Mother of ev'ry worth, as that of joy.
Men of the world this doctrine ill digest ;
 They smile at piety ; yet boast aloud
Good-will to men ; nor know, they strive to part
 What *nature* joins ; and thus confute themselves.
 With *piety* begins all good on earth ;
 'Tis the first-born of rationality.
Conscience, her first law broken, wounded lyes ;
 Enfeebled, lifeless, impotent to good ;
 A feign'd affection bounds her utmost pow'r.
Some we can't love, but for th' Almighty's sake ;
 A foe to God was ne'er true friend to man ;
 Some sinister intent taints all he does,

And in his kindest actions, he's unkind.

On piety, humanity is built :

And, on humanity, much happiness :

And yet still more on piety itself.

A soul in commerce with her God, is heav'n :

Feels not the tumults and the shocks of life :

The whirls of passions, and the strokes of heart,

A Deity believ'd, is joy begun :

A Deity ador'd, is joy advanc'd ;

A Deity belov'd, is joy matur'd.

Each branch of *piety* delight inspires :

Faith builds a bridge from this world to the next,

O'er death's dark gulph and all its horror hides :

Praise, the sweet exhalation of our joy,

That joy exalts, and makes it sweeter still :

Pray'r ardent opens heav'n, lets down a stream

Of glory on the consecrated hour

Of man, in audience with the Deity.

Who worships the *Great God*, that instant joins

The first in heav'n, and sets his foot on hell.

Lorenzo ! when wast thou at church *before* ?

Thou think'st the service long : but is it just ?

Tho' just, unwelcome : thou hadst rather tread

Unhallow'd ground : the muse, to win thine ear,

Must take an air less solemn : she complies.

Good conscience ! at the sound *the world* retires :

Verse disaffects it, and *Lorenzo* smiles :

Yet has she her *seraglio* full of charms ;

And such as age shall heighten, not impair.

Art thou dejected ? is thy mind o'ercast ?

Amid her fair ones, thou the fairest chuse,

To chase thy gloom.——“ Go, fix some weighty *truth* ;

“ Chain down some *passion* ; do some gen'rous good ;

“ Teach *ignorance* to see, or *grief* to smile ;

“ Correct thy *friend*; befriend thy greatest *foe*;
 “ Or, with warm heart, and confidence divine,
 “ Spring up, and lay strong hold on *him* who made
 “ thee.”——

Thy gloom is scatter'd, sprightly spirits flow;
 Tho' wither'd is thy vine, and harp unstrung.

Dost call the bowl, the viol, and the dance,
 Loud mirth, mad laughter? wretched comforters!
 Physicians! more than half of thy disease.
 Laughter, tho' never censur'd yet as sin
 (Pardon a thought that only *seems* severe)
 Is half immortal: is it much indulg'd?
 By venting spleen, or dissipating thought,
 It shews a *scorner*, or it makes a *fool*;
 And sins, as hurting others, or ourselves.
 'Tis *pride*, or *emptiness*, applies the straw,
 That tickles little minds to mirth effuse;
 Of grief as impotent, portentous sign!
 The house of laughter makes a house of woe.
 A man *triumphant* is a monstrous sight;
 A man *dejected* is a sight as mean.

What cause for *triumph*, where such ills abound?
 What for *dejection*, where presides a pow'r,
 Who call'd us into being to be blest?
 So grieve, as conscious grief may rise to joy;
 So joy, as conscious joy to grief may fall.
 Most true, a wise man never will be sad;
 But neither will sonorous, bubbling mirth,
 A shallow stream of happiness betray:
 Too happy to be sportive, he's serene.

Yet wouldst thou laugh (but at thy own expence)
 This counsel strange should I presume to give——
 “ Retire, and read thy *bible*, to be gay.”
 These truths abound of sov'reign aid to peace;

230 THE COMPLAINT:

Ah ! do not prize them less, because inspir'd,
 As thou and thine, are apt and proud to do.
 If *not* inspir'd, that pregnant page had stood,
Time's treasure ! and the wonder of the wife !
 Thou think'st, perhaps, thy *soul* alone at stake ;
 Alas !----should men mistake thee for a *fool* ;----
 What man of taste for genius, wisdom, truth,
 Tho' tender of thy fame, could interpose ?
 Believe me, sense, *here*, acts a double part,
 And the true critic is a *Christian* too.

But *these*, thou thinkst, are gloomy paths to joy.----
 True joy in sun-shine ne'er was found at first ;
 They, first, themselves offend, who greatly please ;
 And travel only gives us sound repose.
 Heav'n *sells* all pleasure ; effort is the price ;
 The joys of conquest, are the joys of man ;
 And *glory* the victorious *laurel* spreads
 O'er *pleasure's* pure, perpetual, placid stream.

There is a time, when toil must be preferr'd ;
 Or joy, by mis-tim'd fondness, is undone.
 A man of *pleasure*, is a man of *pains*.
 Thou wilt not take the trouble to be blest.
 False joys, indeed, are born from want of thought ;
 From thought's full bent, and energy, the *true* ;
 And that demands a mind in equal poize,
 Remote from gloomy grief, and glaring joy.
 Much joy not only speaks small happiness,
 But happiness, that shortly must expire.
 Can joy, unbottom'd in reflection, stand ?
 And, in a tempest, can reflection live ?
 Can joy, like thine, secure itself an hour ?
 Can joy, like thine, meet accident unshock'd ?
 Or ope the door to honest poverty ?
 Or talk with threat'ning death, and not turn pale !

In such a world, and such a nature, *these*
 Are needful fundamentals of delight :
 These fundamentals, give delight *indeed* ;
 Delight, pure, delicate, and durable ;
 Delight, unshaken, masculine, divine ;
 A constant, and a sound, but *serious* joy.

Is joy the daughter of severity ?

It is :---yet far my doctrine from severe.

" Rejoice for ever : " it becomes a man ;

Exalts, and sets him nearer to the gods.

" Rejoice for ever," *nature* cries, " Rejoice ; "

And drinks to man, in her nectareous cup,

Mixt up of delicacies for ev'ry sense ;

To the great founder of the bounteous feast,

Drinks glory, gratitude, eternal praise ;

And he that will not *pledge her*, is a churl.

Ill firmly to support, *good* fully taste,

Is the whole science of felicity :

Yet *sparing pledge* : *her* bowl is not the best

Mankind can boast.---" A rational repast ;

" Exertion, vigilance, a mind in arms,

" A military discipline of thought,

" To foil *temptation* in the doubtful field ;

" And ever-waking ardor for *the right*."

'Tis *these*, first, give, then guard, a chearful heart.

Nought that is *right*, think little ; well aware,

What reason bids, God bids ; by *His* command

How aggrandiz'd, the smallest thing we do !

Thus, *nothing* is insipid to the wise ;

To thee, insipid all, but what is *mad* ;

Joys season'd high, and tasting strong of guilt.

Mad ! (thou reply'st, with indignation fir'd)

" Of antient sages proud to tread the steps,

" I follow *nature*."---Follow *nature* still,

But look it be thine *own*: is *conscience*, then,
 No part of nature? is she not *supreme*?
 Thou regicide! O raise her from the dead!
 Then, follow nature; and resemble God.

When, spite of *conscience*, pleasure is pursu'd,
Man's nature is *unnaturally* pleas'd:
 And what's unnatural, is painful too
 At intervals, and must disgust ev'n thee!
 The *fact* thou knowst; but not, perhaps, the *cause*.
Virtue's foundations with the world's were laid;
 Heav'n mixt her with our make, and twisted close
 Her sacred int'rests with the strings of life.
 Who breaks her awful mandate, shocks himself,
 His better self: and is it greater pain,
 Our *soul* should murmur, or our *dust* repine?
 And one, in their eternal war, *must* bleed.

If one *must* suffer, which should least be spar'd?
 The pains of mind surpass the pains of sense:
 Ask, then, the gout, what torment is in guilt.
 The joys of *sense* to *mental* joys are mean:
 Sense on the present only feeds; the soul
 On past, and future, forages for joy.
 'Tis hers, by retrospect, thro' *time* to range;
 And forward *time's* great sequel to survey.
 Could human courts take vengeance on the *mind*,
 Axes might rust, and racks, and gibbets, fall:
 Guard, then, thy mind, and leave the rest to fate.

Lorenzo! wilt thou never be a man?
 The man is dead, who for the body lives,
 Lur'd, by the beating of his pulse, to list
 With ev'ry lust, that wars against his peace;
 And sets him quite at variance with himself.
 Thyself, first, know; then love: a *self* there is
 Of virtue fond, that kindles at her charms.

A *self* there is, as fond of ev'ry vice,
While ev'ry virtue wounds it to the heart;
Humility degrades it, *justice* robs,
Blest *bounty* beggars it, fair *truth* betrays,
And godlike *magnanimity* destroys.
This self, when rival to the former, scorn;
When not in competition, kindly treat,
Defend it, feed it:—but when virtue bids,
Toss, or to the fowls, or to the flames.
And why? 'tis love of *pleasure* bids thee bleed;
Comply, or own self-love *extinct*; or *blind*.

For what is *vice*? self-love in a mistake;
A poor blind merchant buying joys too dear.
And *virtue*, what? 'tis self-love in her wits,
Quite skilful in the market of delight.
Self-love's good sense is love of that dread pow'r,
From whom herself, and all she can enjoy.
Other self-love is but disguis'd self-hate;
More mortal than the malice of our foes;
A self-hate, *now*, scarce felt; *then* felt full-sore,
When being, curst; extinction, loud implor'd;
And ev'ry thing prefer'd to what we are.

Yet *this self-love* *Lorenzo* makes his choice;
And, in this choice triumphant, boasts of joy.
How is his want of happiness betray'd,
By disaffection to the present hour!
Imagination wanders far afield:
The future pleases: why? the present pains:—
“But that's a *secret*!”—Yes, which all men know;
And know from thee, discover'd unawares.
Thy ceaseless agitation, restless roll
From cheat to cheat, impatient of a pause;
What is it?—'tis the cradle of the soul,
From *instinct* sent, to rock her in disease,

Which her physician, *reason*, will not cure.
 A poor expedient ! yet thy best ; and while
 It mitigates thy pain, it *owns* it too.

Such are *Lorenzo's* wretched remedies !

The weak have remedies ; the wise have joys.
 Superior wisdom is superior bliss.

And what sure mark distinguishes the wise ?

Consistent wisdom ever wills the same ;

Thy fickle wish is ever on the wing.

Sick of herself, is *folly's* character ;

As *wisdom's* is, a modest self-applause.

A change of evils is thy good supreme ;

Nor, but in motion, canst thou find thy rest.

Man's greatest strength is shewn in standing still.

The first sure symptom of a mind in health,

Is rest of heart, and pleasure felt at home.

False pleasure from abroad her joys imports ;

Rich from within, and self-sustain'd, the *true*.

The true is fixt, and solid as a rock ;

Slipp'ry the *false*, and tossing, as the wave.

This, a wild wanderer on earth, like *Gain* ;

That, like the fabled, self-enamour'd boy,

Home-contemplation her supreme delight ;

She dreads an interruption from without,

Smit with her own condition ; and the more

Intense she gazes, still it charms the more.

No man is happy, till he thinks, on earth,

There breathes not a more happy than himself :

Then envy dies, and love o'erflows on all ;

And love o'erflowing makes an angel here.

Such angels all, intitled to repose

On *Him* who governs fate : tho' tempest frowns,

Tho' nature shakes, how soft to lean on Heav'n !

To lean on *Him*, on whom arch-angels lean !

With inward eyes, and silent as the grave,
They stand collecting ev'ry beam of thought,
Till their hearts kindle with divine delight;
For all their thoughts, like angels, seen of old
In *Israel's* dream, come from, and go to, heav'n:
Hence, are *they* studious of sequestred scenes;
While noise, and dissipation, comfort *thee*.

Were all men happy, revellings would cease,
That opiate for inquietude within.

Lorenzo! never man was truly blest,
But it compos'd, and gave him such a cast,
As *folly* might mistake for want of joy.
A cast, unlike the triumph of the proud;
A modest aspect, and a smile at heart.
O for a joy from thy *Philander's* spring!
A spring perennial, rising in the breast,
And permanent, as pure! no turbid stream?
Of rapt'rous exultation swelling high;
Which, like land-floods, impetuous pour awhile,
Then sink at once, and leave us in the mire.
What does the man, who transient joy prefers?
What, but prefer the bubbles to the stream?

Vain are all sudden sallies of delight;
Convulsions of a weak distemper'd joy.
Joy's a fixt state; a tenor, not a start.
Bliss there is none, but *unprecarious* bliss:
That is the gem: sell all, and purchase that.
Why go a begging to contingencies,
Not gain'd with ease, nor safely lov'd, if gain'd?
At good fortuitous, draw back, and pause;
Suspect it; what thou canst ensure, enjoy;
And nought but what thou giv'st thyself, is sure.
Reason perpetuates joy that reason gives,
And makes it as immortal as herself:

236 THE COMPLAINT:

To mortals, nought immortal, but their worth.

Worth, conscious worth ! should *absolutely* reign ;
 And other joys ask leave for their approach ;
 Nor, unexamin'd, ever leave obtain.
 Thou art all anarchy ; a mob of joys
 Wage war, and perish in intestine broils ;
 Not the least promise of internal peace !
 No bosom-comfort ! or unborrow'd bliss !
 Thy thoughts are vagabonds ; all outward-bound ;
 'Midst sands, and rocks, and storms, to cruise for pleasure ;
 If gain'd, dear-bought ; and better miss'd than gain'd.
 Much pain must expiate, what much pain procur'd.
Fancy, and *sense*, from an infected shore,
 Thy cargo bring ; and pestilence the prize,
 Then, such thy thirst, (insatiable thirst !
 By fond indulgence but inflam'd the more)
Fancy still cruises, when poor *sense* is tir'd.

Imagination is the *Paphian* shop,
 Where feeble happiness, like *Vulcan*, lame,
 Bids foul *ideas*, in their dark recess,
 And hot as hell (which kindled the black fires)
 With wanton art, those fatal arrows form,
 Which murder all thy time, health, wealth, and fame.
 Wouldst thou receive them, other thoughts there are,
 On angel-wing, descending from above,
 Which these, with art divine, would counterwork,
 And form celestial armour for thy peace.

In *this* is seen imagination's *guilt* ;
 But who can count her *follies* ? she betrays thee,
 To think in grandeur there is something great.
 For works of curious art, and antient fame,
 Thy genius hungers, elegantly pain'd ;
 And foreign climes must cater for thy taste.
 Hence, what disaster ! — tho' the price was paid,

That persecuting priest, the *Turk* of *Rome*,
 Whose foot, (ye gods!) tho' cloven, must be kiss'd,
 Detain'd thy dinner on the *Latian* shore;
 (Such is the fate of honest Protestants!)
 And poor *magnificence* is starv'd to death.
 Hence just resentment, indignation, ire!—
 Be pacify'd; if *out-ward* things are great,
 'Tis *magnanimity* great things to scorn;
 Pompous expences, and parades august,
 And courts; that insalubrious soil to peace,
 True happiness ne'er enter'd at an eye;
 True happiness resides in things unseen.
 No smiles of *fortune* ever blest the bad,
 Nor can her frowns rob *innocence* of joys;
 That jewel wanting, triple crowns are poor:
 So tell his *Holiness*, and be reveng'd.

Pleasure, we both agree, is man's chief good;
 Our only contest, what deserves the name.
 Give *pleasure's* name to nought, but what has pass'd
 Th' authentic seal of *reason* (which, like *Yorke*,
 Demurs on what it passes) and defies
 The tooth of time; when past, a pleasure still;
 Dearer on trial, lovelier for its age,
 And doubly to be priz'd, as it promotes
 Our future, while it forms our present, joy.
 Some joys the future overcast; and some
 Throw all their beams that way, and gild the tomb.
 Some joys endear eternity; some give
 Abhor'd annihilation dreadful charms.
 Are rival joys contending for thy choice?
 Consult thy *whole existence*, and be safe;
 That oracle will put all doubt to flight.
 Short is the lesson, tho' my lecture long,
 Be good—and let Heav'n answer for the rest.

Yet, with a sigh o'er all mankind, I grant,
 In this our day of proof, our land of hope,
 The *good man* has his clouds that intervene;
 Clouds, that *obscure* his *sublunary* day,
 But never conquer: ev'n the *best* must own,
Patience, and *resignation*, are the pillars
 Of human peace on earth. The pillars, these;
 But those of *Seth* not more remote from thee,
 Till *this* heroic lesson thou hast learnt;
 To frown at *pleasure*, and to smile in *pain*.
 Fir'd at thy prospect of unclouded bliss,
 Heav'n in reversion, like the sun, as yet
 Beneath th' horizon, cheers us in this world;
 It sheds, on souls susceptible of light,
 The glorious dawn of our eternal day.

" This (says *Lorenzo*) is a fair harangue:
 " But can harangues blow black strong nature's stream;
 " Or stem the tide heav'n pushes thro' our veins,
 " Which sweeps away man's impotent resolves,
 " And lays his labour level with the *world*?"

Themselves men make their comment on mankind;
 And think nought *is*, but what they find at home:
 Thus, weakness to chimera turns the truth.
 Nothing romantic has the muse prescrib'd.

* Above, *Lorenzo* saw the man of earth,
 The *mortal man*; and wretched was the sight.
 To balance that, to comfort, and exalt,
 Now see the *man immortal*: him, I mean,
 Who lives as such; whose heart, full-bent on heav'n,
 Leans all that way, his byas to the stars.
 The *world's* dark shades, in contrast set, shall raise
 His lustre more; tho' bright, without a foil:
 Observe his awful portrait, and admire;

* In a former Night

Nor stop at wonder : imitate, and live.

Some angel guide my pencil, while I draw,
What nothing less, than angel can exceed,
A man on earth devoted to the skies,
Like ships in seas, while *in, above*, the world.

With aspect mild, and elevated eye,
Behold him seated on a mount serene,
Above the fogs of *sense*, and *passion's* storm ;
All the black cares, and tumults, of this life,
Like harmless thunders, breaking at his feet,
Excite his pity, not impair his peace.
Earth's genuine sons, the scepter'd, and the slave,
A mingl'd mob ! a wand'ring herd ! he sees
Bewilder'd in the vale ; in all unlike !
His full reverse in all ! what higher praise ?
What stronger demonstration of the right ?

The present all *their* care ; the future, *his*.
When publick welfare calls, or private want,
They give to fame ; his bounty *he* conceals.
Their virtue varnish nature ; *his*, exalt.
Mankind's esteem *they* court ; and *he*, his own.
Theirs, the wild chace of *false* felicities ;
His, the compos'd possession of the true.
Alike throughout is *his* consistent peace,
All of one colour, and an even thread ;
While party-colour'd shreds of happiness,
With hideous gaps between, patch up for *them*
A mad-man's robe ; each puff of *fortune* blows
The tatters by, and shews their nakedness.

He sees with other eyes than *theirs* : where *they*
Behold a sun, *he* spies a Deity ;
What makes *them* only smile, makes *him* adore.
Where *they* see mountains, *he* but atoms sees ;
An empire, in *his* balance, weighs a grain.

They things terrestrial worship, as divine;
His hopes immortal blow them by, as dust,
 That dims his sight, and shortens his survey,
 Which longs, in infinite, to lose all bound.
 Titles and honours (if they prove his fate)
He lays aside to find his dignity;
 No dignity *they* find in ought besides.
They triumph in externals, (which conceal
 Man's real glory) proud of an eclipse.
 Himself too much *he* prizes to be proud,
 And nothing thinks so great in man, as *man*.
 Too dear *he* holds his int'rest, to neglect
 Another's welfare, or his right invade;
Their int'rest, like a lion, lives on prey.
They kindle at the shadow of a wrong;
 Wrong *he* sustains with temper, looks on heav'n,
 Nor stoops to think his injurer, his foe;
 Nought, but what wounds his virtue, wounds his peace;
 A cover'd heart *their* character defends;
 A cover'd heart denies *him* half his praise.
 With nakedness *his* innocence agrees;
 While *their* broad foliage testifies their fall.
Their no-joys end, where *his* full feast begins;
His joys create, *theirs* murder, future bliss.
 To triumph in existence, *his* alone;
 And *his* alone, triumphantly to think
 His *true* existence is not yet begun.
 His glorious course was, yesterday, complete;
 Death, then, was welcome; yet life still is sweet.

But nothing charms *Lorenzo*, like the firm,
 Undaunted breast——and whose is that high praise?
They yield to pleasure, tho' they danger brave,
 And shew no fortitude, but in the field;
 If there they shew it, 'tis for glory shewn;

Nor will that cordial always man *their* hearts.
 A cordial *his* sustains, that cannot fail ;
 By pleasure unsubdu'd, unbroke by pain,
He shares in that Omnipotence he trusts.
 All-bearing, all-attempting, till he falls ;
 And when he falls, writes VICI on his shield.
 From magnanimity, all *fear* above ;
 From nobler recompense, above *applause* ;
 Which owes to man's *short* out-look all its charms.

Backward to credit what he never felt,
Lorenzo cries,—" Where shines this miracle ?"
 From what root rises this *immortal* man ?
 A root that grows not in *Lorenzo's* ground ;
 The root dissect, nor wonder at the *flower*.

He follows nature (not like * thee ;) and shews us
 An uninverted system of a man.
 His *appetite* wears *reason's* golden chain,
 And finds, in due restraint, its luxury.
 His *passion*, like an eagle, well-reclaim'd,
 Is taught to fly at nought, but infinite.
 Patient his *hope*, un-anxious is his *care*,
 His *caution* fearless, and his *grief* (if grief
 The gods ordain) a stranger to despair.
 And why ?—because affection, more than meet,
 His wisdom leaves not disengag'd from heav'n.
 Those secondary goods that smile on earth,
 He, loving, in *proportion*, loves in *peace*.
 They most the world enjoy, who least admire.
 His *understanding* 'scapes the common cloud
 Of fumes, arising from a boiling breast.
 His head is clear, because his heart is cool,
 By worldly competitions uninflam'd.
 The mod'rate movements of his soul admit

X

* See page 101. line ult.

Distinct ideas, and matur'd debate,
 An eye impartial, and an ev'n scale;
 Whence judgment sound, and unrepenting choice.
 Thus, in a double sense, the *good* are wise;
 On its own dunghill, wiser than the *world*.
 What, then, the world? it *must* be doubly weak;
 Strange truth! as soon would they believe the *creed*.

Yet thus it is; nor otherways *can* be;
 So far from aught romantic, what I sing.
 Bliss has no being, virtue has no strength,
 But from the prospect of immortal life.
 Who think earth all, or (what weighs just the same)
 Who care no farther, *must* prize what it yields;
 Fond of its fancies, proud of its parades.
 Who thinks earth nothing, *can't* its charms admire;
He can't a foe, tho' most malignant, hate,
 Because that hate would prove his greater foe.
 'Tis hard for *them* (yet who so loudly boast
 Good-will to men?) to love their dearest friend;
 For may he not invade their *good supreme*,
 Where the least jealousy turns love to gall?
 All shines to *them*, that for a season shines.
 Each act, each thought, *he* questions, "What its weight,
 "Its colour what, a thousand ages hence?"——
 And what it *there* appears, he deems it *now*.
 Hence, pure are the recesses of his soul.
 The god-like man has nothing to conceal.
 His virtue, constitutionally deep,
 Has *habit's* firmness, and *affection's* flame;
 Angels, ally'd, descend to feed the fire;
 And *death*, which others slays, makes him a god.

And now, *Lorenzo*! bigot of this world!
 Wont to disdain poor bigots caught by heav'n!
 Stand by thy *scorn*, and be reduc'd to nought:

For what art thou? — thou boaster! while *thy* glare,
Thy gaudy grandeur, and mere worldly worth,
Like a broad mist, at distance, strikes us most;
And, like a mist, is nothing when at hand;
His merit, like a mountain, on approach,
Swells more, and rises nearer to the skies,
By promise, *now*, and, by possession, *soon*,
(*Too soon, too much*, it cannot be) his own.

From this thy just *annihilation* rise,
Lorenzo! rise to *something*, by reply.
The world, thy client, listens, and expects;
And longs to crown thee with immortal praise.
Canst thou be silent? no; for *wit* is thine;
And wit talks *most*, when *least* she has to say,
And *reason* interrupts not her career.
She'll say — *That mists above the mountains rise*;
And, with a thousand pleasantries, amuse;
She'll sparkle, puzzle, flutter, raise a dust,
And fly conviction, in the dust she rais'd.

Wit, how delicious to man's dainty taste! —
'Tis precious, as the vehicle of *sense*;
But, as its substitute, a dire disease.
Pernicious talent! flatter'd by the world,
By the blind world, which thinks the talent rare.
Wisdom is rare, *Lorenzo!* wit abounds;
Passion can give it; sometimes *wine* inspires
The lucky flash; and *madness* rarely fails.
Whatever cause the spirit strongly stirs,
Confers the bays, and rivals thy renown.
For thy renown, 'twere well, was this the worst;
Chance often hits it; and, to pique thee more,
See *dulness*, blund'ring on vivacities,
Shakes her sage head at the calamity,
Which has expos'd, and let her down to thee.

But *wisdom* ; awful wisdom ! which inspects,
 Discerns, compares, weighs, separates, infers,
 Seizes the right, and holds it to the last ;
 How rare ! in senates, synods, sought in vain ;
 Or if *there* found, 'tis sacred to the *few* ;
 While a lewd prostitute to multitudes,
 Frequent, as fatal, *wit* : in civil life,
Wit makes an enterprizer ; *sense*, a man,
Wit hates authority ; commotion loves,
 And thinks herself the lightning of the storm.
 In *states*, 'tis dangerous ; in *religion*, death :
 Shall *wit* turn Christian, when the dull believe ?
Sense is our *helmet*, *wit* is but the plume ;
 The *plume* exposes, 'tis our *helmet* saves.
Sense is the di'mond, weighty, solid, sound ;
 When cut by *wit*, it casts a brighter beam ;
 Yet, *wit* apart, it is a di'mond still.
Wit, widow'd of *good-sense*, is worse than nought ;
 It hoists more sail to run against a rock.
 Thus, a *half-Chesterfield* is quite a fool ;
 Whom *dull* fools scorn, and bless their want of wit.
 How ruinous the rock I warn thee shun,
 Where *Syrens* sit, to sing thee to thy fate !
 A joy, in which our *reason* bears no part,
 Is but a *sorrow* tickling, ere it stings.
 Let not the cooings of the *world* allure thee ;
 Which of her lovers ever found her true ?
Happy ! of this bad world who little know ;---
 And yet, we much must know her, to be *safe*.
 To *know* the world, not love her, is thy point ;
 She gives but little, nor that little, long.
 There is, I grant, a triumph of the pulse,
 A dance of spirits, a mere froth of joy,
 Our *thoughtless agitation's* idle child,

That mantles high, that sparkles, and expires,
Leaving the soul more vapid than before.
An *animal* ovation ! such as holds
No commerce with our *reason*, but subsists
On junces, thro' the well-ton'd tubes, well-strain'd ;
A nice machine ! scarce ever tun'd aright ;
And when it jars---thy *Syrens* sing no more,
Thy dance is done ; the *demi-god* is thrown
(Short apotheosis !) beneath the *man*,
In coward gloom immers'd, or fell despair.

Art thou yet *dull enough* despair to dread,
And startle at destruction ? if thou art,
Accept a buckler, take it to the field ;
(A field of battle is this mortal life !)
When danger threatens, lay it on thy heart ;
A single sentence proof against the *world*.
“ *Soul, body, fortune !* ev'ry good pertains
“ To one of these ; but prize not all alike ;
“ The goods of fortune to thy body's health,
“ Body to soul, and soul submit to God.”
Wouldst thou build lasting happiness ? do this ;
Th' inverted *Pyramid* can never stand.

Is this truth doubtful ? it outshines the sun ;
Nay, the sun-shines not, but to shew us this,
The single lesson of mankind on earth.
And yet---yet, what ? no news ! mankind is mad ;
Such mighty numbers list against the right,
(And what can't numbers, when bewitch'd, achieve !)
They talk themselves to something like belief,
That all earth's joys are theirs : as *Athens'* fool
Grinn'd from the port, on ev'ry sail his own.

They grin ; but wherefore ? and how long the laugh ?
Half ignorance, their mirth ; and half, a lie ;
To cheat the world, and cheat themselves, they smile.

Hard either task! the most abandon'd own,
 That *others*, if abandon'd, are undone:
 Then, for themselves, the moment *reason* wakes,
 (And Providence denies it long repose)
 O how laborious is their gaiety!
 They scarce can swallow their ebullient spleen,
 Scarce muster patience to support the farce,
 And pump sad laughter, till the curtain falls.
Scarce, did I say? some cannot sit it out;
 Oft their own daring hands the curtain draw,
 And shew us *what* their joy, by their despair.

The clotted hair! gor'd breast! blaspheming eye!
 Its impious fury still alive in death!----
 Shut, shut the shocking scene.----But Heav'n denies
 A cover to such guilt; and so should man.
 Look round, *Lorenzo!* see the reeking blade;
 The invenom'd phial, and the fatal ball;
 Th' strangling cord, and suffocating stream;
 The loathsome rottenness, and foul decays
 From raging riot (flower suicides!)
 And *pride* in these, more execrable still!----
 How horrid all to thought!----but horrors, these,
 That vouch the truth: and aid my feeble song.

From *vice, sense, fancy*, no man can be blest:
 Bliss is too great, to lodge within an hour:
 When an immortal being aims at bliss,
 Duration is essential to the name.
 O for a joy from *reason!* joy from that,
 Which makes man, *man*; and exercis'd aright,
 Will make him *more*: a bounteous joy! that gives,
 And promises; that weaves, with art divine,
 The richest prospect into present peace:
 A joy *ambitious!* joy in common held
 With thrones ethereal, and their greater far:

A joy high-privileg'd from chance, time, death !
 A joy, which *death* shall double ! *judgment*, crown !
 Crown'd higher, and still higher, at each stage,
 Thro' blest eternity's long day ; yet still,
 Not more remote from *sorrow*, than from *him*,
 Whose lavish hand, whose love stupendous, pours
 So much of deity on guilty dust.

There, O my *Lucia* ! may I meet thee there,
 Where not thy presence can improve my bliss !

Affects not this the *sages of the world* ?
 Can nought *affect* them, but what *fools* them too ?
 Eternity, depending on an hour,
 Makes *serious thought* man's wisdom, joy, and praise.
 Nor need you blush (tho' sometimes your designs
 May shun the light) at your designs on heav'n ;
 Sole point ! where *ever-bashful* is your blame.

Are you not *wise* ? — you know you are : yet hear
 One truth, amid your num'rous schemes, mislaid,
 Or overlook'd, or thrown aside, if seen ;

“ Our schemes to plan by *this world*, or the *next*,
 “ Is the sole diff'rence between wise, and fool.”

All *worthy men* will weigh you in *this scale* ;
 What wonder, then, if *they* pronounce you *light* ?
 Is *their* esteem alone not worth your care ?

Accept my simple scheme of *common-sense* ;
 Thus, save your fame, and make *two worlds* your own.

The world *replies* not ; — but the world *persists* ;
 And puts the *cause* off to the longest day,
 Planning evasions for the day of doom.
 So far, at that *re-hearing*, from redress,
 They then turn *witnesses* against themselves.
 Hear that, *Lorenzo* ! nor be wise to-morrow.
 Haste, haste ! a man, by nature, is in haste ;
 For who shall answer for another hour ?

'Tis highly prudent, to make *one* sure friend ;
And that thou canst not do, this side the skies.

Ye sons of earth ! (nor *willing* to be more !)
Since *verse* you think from priestcraft somewhat free,
Thus, in an age so gay, the muse plain truths
(Truths, which, at church, you *might* have heard in prose)
Has ventur'd into light ; well-pleas'd the verse
Should be forgot, if you the truths retain ;
And crown her with your welfare, not your praise.
But *praise* she need not fear : I see my fate ;
And headlong leap, like *Curtius*, down the gulph.
Since many an ample *volume*, mighty *tome*,
Must die ; and die unwept ; O thou minute,
Devoted *page* ! go forth among thy foes ;
Go, nobly proud of martyrdom for truth,
And die a double death : mankind, incens'd,
Denies thee long to live : nor shalt thou rest,
When thou art dead ; in *Stygian* shades arraign'd
By *Lucifer*, as traitor to his throne ;
And bold blasphemer of his friend, — *the world* ;
The *world*, whose legions cost him slender pay,
And *volunteers*, around his banner swarm ;
Prudent, as *Prussia*, in her zeal for *Gaul*.

“ Are all, then, fools ? ” *Lorenzo* cries — yes, all,
But such as hold *this* doctrine (new to thee ;)
“ The mother of true wisdom is the *will* : ”
The noblest *intellect*, a fool without it.
World-wisdom much has done, and more may do,
In arts and sciences, in wars, and peace ;
But art and science, like thy wealth, will leave thee,
And make thee twice a beggar at thy death.
This is the *most* indulgence can afford ; -----
“ Thy *wisdom* all can do, but --- make thee *wise* . ”
Nor think this censure is severe on thee ;
Satan, thy master, I dare call a dunce.

NIGHT *the* NINTH, *and* LAST.

THE
CONSOLATION.

Containing, among other things,

- I. A *moral* Survey of the *nocturnal* Heavens.
- II. A *Night-Address* to the DEITY.

Humbly Inscribed

To his GRACE the DUKE of NEWCASTLE, one of
his Majesty's principal Secretaries of State.

—*Fatis contraria fata rependens.* VIRG.

NIGHT THE NINTH, LAST.
THE
CONSOLATION.

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Thoroughly Intended

To be Given the Duke of NEWCASTLE, one of
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—Printed by J. B. G. in the Strand, near St. Dunstons Church.

NIGHT THE NINTH, AND LAST.

THE CONSOLATION.

AS when a traveller, a long day past
In painful search of what he cannot find,
At night's approach, content with the next cot,
There ruminates, awhile, his labour lost;
Then cheers his heart with what his fate affords,
And chants his sonnet to deceive the time,
Till the due season calls him to repose:
Thus I, long-travell'd in the ways of men,
And dancing, with the rest, the giddy maze,
Where *disappointment* smiles at *hope's* career;
Warn'd by the languor of life's ev'ning ray,
At length have hous'd me in an humble shed,
Where, future wand'ring banish'd from my thought,
And waiting, patient, the sweet hour of rest,
I chase the moments with a serious song.
Song soothes our pains; and age has pains to soothe.

When age, care, crime, and friends embrac'd at heart,
Torn from my bleeding breast, and *death's* dark shade,
Which hovers o'er me, quench th' ethereal fire;
Canst thou, O *night*! indulge one labour more?
One labour more indulge: then sleep, my strain!
Till, haply, wak'd by *Raphael's* golden lyre,
Where night, death, age, care, crime, and sorrow, cease;
To bear a part in everlasting lays;
Tho' far, far higher set, in aim, I trust,

252 THE CONSOLATION

Symphonious to this humble prelude *here*.

Has not the muse asserted *pleasures pure*,
Like those above ; exploding other joys ?
Weigh what was urg'd, *Lorenzo* ! fairly weigh ;
And tell me, hast thou cause to triumph still ?
I think, thou wilt forbear a boast so bold.
But if, beneath the favour of mistake,
Thy smile's sincere not more sincere can be ;
Lorenzo's smile, than my compassion for him.
The sick in *body* call for aid ; the sick
In *mind* are covetous of more disease ;
And when at *worst*, they dream themselves quite *well*,
To *know* ourselves diseas'd, is half our cure.
When *nature's* blush by *custom* is wip'd off,
And conscience, deaden'd by repeated strokes,
Has into *manners* naturaliz'd our *crimes* ;
The curse of curses is, our curse to love ;
To triumph in the blackness of our guilt,
(As *Indians* glory in the deepest jet ;)
And throw aside our *senses*, with our *peace*.

But, grant no guilt, no shame, no least alloy ;
Grant joy and glory, quite unfully'd, shone ;
Yet, still, it ill deserves *Lorenzo's* heart.
No *joy*, no *glory*, glitters in thy sight,
But, thro' the thin partition of an hour,
I see its fables wove by *destiny*,
And *that* in sorrow bury'd ; *this*, in shame ;
While howling *furies* ring the doleful knell ;
And *conscience*, now so soft thou scarce canst hear
Her whisper, echoes their eternal peal.

Where, the prime actors of the *last year's* scene ;
Their port so proud, their buskin, and their plume ?
How many *sleep*, who kept the world awake
With lustre, and with noise ! has *death* proclaim'd

A truce, and hung his sated lance on high ?
 'Tis branch'd still ; nor shall the *present year*
 Be more tenacious of her human leaf,
 Or spread of feeble life a thinner fall.

But needless *monuments* to wake the thought ;
 Life's *gayest* scenes speak man's mortality ;
 Tho' in a stile more florid, full as plain,
 As *Mausoleums, pyramids, and tombs*.
 What are our noblest ornaments, but *deaths*
 Turn'd flatterers of life, in paint, or marble,
 The well-stain'd canvas, or the scatur'd stone ?
 Our fathers grace, or rather haunt, the scene ;
 Joy peoples her pavilion from the dead.

" *Profest diversions!* cannot these escape ?" —
 Far from it: these present us with a shroud ;
 And talk of *death*, like garlands o'er a grave.
 As some bold plunderers, for bury'd *wealth*,
 We ransack tombs for *pastime* ; from the dust
 Call up the sleeping hero ; bid him tread
 The scene for our amusement : how like gods
 We sit ; and, wrapt in immortality,
 Shed gen'rous tears on wretches born to die ;
 Their fate deploring, to forget *our own* ?

What, all the pomps, and triumphs of our lives,
 But legacies in blossom ? Our lean soil,
 Luxuriant grown, and rank in vanities,
 From friends interr'd beneath ; a rich manure !
 Like other worms, we banquet on the dead ;
 Like other worms, shall we crawl on, nor know
 Our present frailties, or approaching fate ?

Lorenzo! such the glories of the world !
 What is the world itself ? *Thy world?*-----A grave !
 Where is the dust that has not been alive ?
 The spade, the plough, disturb our ancestors ;

254 THE CONSOLATION:

From human mould we reap our daily bread.
 The globe around earth's hollow surface shakes,
 And is the ceiling of her sleeping sons.
 O'er devastation we blind revels keep;
 Whole bury'd towns support the dancer's heel.
 The *moist* of human frame the sun exhales;
 Winds scatter, thro' the mighty void, the *dry*;
 Earth repossesses part of what she gave,
 And the freed spirit mounts on wings of fire;
 Each element partakes our scatter'd spoils;
 As nature, wide, our ruins spread; man's *death*
 Inhabits all things, but the thought of man.

Nor man alone; his breathing bust expires,
 His tomb is mortal; empires die: where, now,
 The *Roman*? *Greek*? they stalk, an empty name!
 Yet few regard them in this useful light;
 Tho' half our learning is *their* epitaph.
 When down thy vale, unlock'd by midnight thought,
 That loves to wander in thy sunless realms,
 O *death*! I stretch my view; what visions rise!
 What triumphs! toils imperial! arts divine!
 In wither'd laurels, glide before my sight?
 What lengths of far-fam'd ages, billow'd-high
 With human agitation, roll along
 In unsubstantial images of air!
 The melancholy ghosts of dead renown,
 Whisp'ring faint echoes of the world's applause,
 With penitential aspect, as they pass,
 All point at earth, and hiss at human pride,
 The wisdom of the *wise*, and praisings of the *great*.
 But, O *Lorenzo*! far the rest above,
 Of ghastly nature, and enormous size,
 One form assaults my sight, and chills my blood,
 And shakes my frame. Of *one* departed world

I see the mighty shadow ; oozy wreath
 And dismal sea-weed crown her ; o'er her urn
 Reclin'd, she weeps her desolated realms,
 And bloated sons ; and, weeping, prophecies
Another's dissolution, soon, in flames.
 But, like *Cassandra*, prophecies in vain ;
 In vain, to many ; not, I trust, to thee.

For, know'st thou not, or art thou *loth* to know,
 The great decree, the counsel of the skies ?
Deluge and *conflagration*, dreadful powers !
 Prime ministers of vengeance ! chain'd in caves
 Distinct, apart the giant furies roar ;
 Apart ; or such their horrid rage for ruin,
 In mutual conflict would they rise, and wage
 Eternal war, till one was quite devour'd.
 But not for *this*, ordain'd their boundless rage ;
 When heav'n's inferior instruments of wrath,
War, famine, pestilence, are found too weak
 To scourge a world for her enormous crimes,
These are let loose, alternate : down they rush,
 Swift and tempestuous, from th' eternal throne,
 With irresistible commission arm'd,
 The world, in vain corrected, to destroy,
 And ease creation of the shocking scene.

Seest thou, *Lorenzo* ! what depends on man ?
 The *fate* of nature ; as *for* man, her *birth*.
Earth's actors change earth's transitory scenes,
 And make creation groan with human guilt.
 How must it groan, in a new deluge whelm'd,
 But not of waters ! At the destin'd hour,
 By the loud trumpet summon'd to the charge,
 See, all the formidable sons of fire,
 Eruptions, earthquakes, comets, lightnings, play
 Their various engines ; all at once disgorge

256 THE CONSOLATION:

Their blazing magazines; and take, by storm,
This poor terrestrial citadel of man.

Amazing period! when each mountain-height
Out-burns *Vesuvius*; rocks eternal pour
Their melted mass, as rivers once they pour'd;
Stars rush; and final *ruin* fiercely drives
Her ploughshare o'er creation!—while aloft,
More than astonishment! if more *can* be!
Far other *firmament* than e'er was seen,
Than e'er was thought by man! far other stars:
Stars animate, that govern these of fire;
Far other *sun*!—a sun, O how unlike
The babe at *Bethle'm*! How unlike the man
That groan'd on *Calvary*—Yet *He* it is;
That man of sorrows! O how chang'd! what pomp
In grandeur terrible, all heav'n descends!
And gods, ambitious, triumph in his train.
A swift archangel, with his golden wing,
As blots and clouds, that darken and disgrace
The scene divine, sweeps stars and suns aside.
And now, all dross remov'd, heav'n's own pure day,
Full on the confines of our aether, flames.
While (dreadful contrast!) far, how far beneath!
Hell bursting, belches forth her blazing seas,
And storms sulphureous; her voracious jaws
Expanding wide, and roaring for her prey.
Lorenzo! welcome to this scene; the last
In nature's course; the first in wisdom's thought.
This strikes, if aught can strike thee; *this* awakes
The most supine; *this* snatches man from death.
Rouse, rouse, *Lorenzo*! then, and follow me,
Where truth, the most momentous man can hear,
Loud calls my soul, and ardor wings her flight.
I find my inspiration in my theme;

The grandeur of my subject is my muse.

At *midnight*, when mankind is wrapt in *peace*,
 And worldly *fancy* feeds on golden dreams,
 To give more dread to man's most dreadful hour,
 At midnight, 'tis presum'd, this pomp will burst.
 From tenfold darkness ; sudden as the spark
 From smitten steel ; from nitrous grain, the blaze.
 Man, starting from his couch, shall sleep no more !
 The day is broke, which uever more shall close !
 Above, around, beneath, amazement all !
 Terror and glory join'd in their extremes !
 Our GOD in grandeur, and our *world* on fire !
 All nature struggling in the pangs of death !
 Dost thou not hear her ? dost thou not deplore
 Her strong convulsions, and her final groan ?
 Where are we *now* ? Ah me ! the ground is gone,
 On which we stood, *Lorenzo* ! while thou may'st,
 Provide more firm support, or sink for ever !
 Where ? how ? from whence ? vain hope ! it is too late !
 Where, where, for shelter, shall the guilty fly,
 When consternation turns the *good man* pale ?
 Great day ! for which all other days were made ;
 For which *earth* rose from *chaos* ; *man* from *earth* ;
 And an eternity, the date of gods,
 Descended on poor earth-created man !
 Great day of dread, decision, and despair !
 At thought of thee, each sublunary wish
 Lets go its eager grasp, and drops the world ;
 And catches at each reed of hope in heav'n.
 At *thought* of thee ! — and art thou *absent* then ?
Lorenzo ! no ; 'tis here ; — it is begun ; —
 Already is begun the grand assize,
 In thee, in all : deputed conscience scales
 The dread tribunal, and forestalls our doom ;

258 THE CONSOLATION:

Foretells ; and, by forestalling, proves it *sure*.
Why on himself should man *void* judgment pass?
Is idle *nature* laughing at her sons ?

Who *conscience* sent, her sentence will support,
And GOD above assert that GOD in man.

Thrice happy they ! that enter *now* the court
Heav'n opens in their bosoms : but, how rare,

Ah me ! that magnanimity, how rare !

What hero, like the man who stands himself ?

Who dares to meet his naked heart alone ?

Who hears, intrepid, the full charge it brings,
Resolv'd to silence future murmurs there ?

The coward flies ; and, flying, is undone.

(Art thou a coward ? no :) The coward flies ;

Thinks, but thinks slightly ; asks, but fears to *know* ;

Asks, " *What is Truth ?*" with *Pilate* ; and retires ;

Diffolves the court, and mingles with the throng ;

Asylum sad ! from reason, hope, and heav'n !

Shall all, but man, look out with ardent eye,
For that great day, which was ordain'd *for* man ?

O day of consummation ! mark supreme

(If men are wise) of human thought ! nor least,

Or in the sight of angels, or their KING !

Angels, whose radiant circles, height o'er height,

Order o'er order, rising, blaze o'er blaze,

As in a theatre, surround this scene,

Intent on man, and anxious for his fate,

Angels look out for thee. For thee, their LORD,

To vindicate his glory ; and for thee,

Creation universal calls aloud,

To dis-involve the *moral*-world, and give

To *nature*'s renovation brighter charms.

Shall man alone, whose fate, whose *final* fate,
Hangs on that hour, exclude it from his thought ?

I think of nothing else ; I see ! I feel it !
 All *nature*, like an earthquake, trembling round !
 All *deities*, like summer's swarms, on wing !
 All basking in the full meridian blaze !
 I see the JUDGE enthron'd ! the flaming guard !
 The volume open'd ! open'd every heart !
 A sun-beam pointing out each secret thought !
 No patron ! intercessor none ! now past
 The sweet, the element, mediatorial hour !
 For guilt no plea ! to pain, no pause ! no bound !
 Inexorable, all ! and all, extreme !

Nor man alone ; the foe of GOD and man,
 From his dark den, blaspheming, drags his chain,
 And rears his brazen front, with thunder scarr'd ;
 Receives his sentence, and *begins* his hell.
 All vengeance *past*, now, seems abundant grace :
 Like meteors in a stormy sky, how roll
 His baleful eyes ! he curses whom he dreads ;
 And deems it the first moment of his fall.

'Tis *present* to my thought !---and, yet, where is it ?
Angels can't tell me ; angels cannot *guess*
 The *period* ; from *created* beings lock'd
 In darkness. But the *process*, and the *place*,
 Are less obscure ; for these may *man* inquire.
 Say, thou great close of human hopes and fears !
 Great key of hearts ! great finisher of fates !
 Great end ! and great beginning ! say, where art thou ?
 Art thou in *time*, or in *eternity* ?
 Nor in *eternity*, nor *time*, I find thee.
 These, as two monarchs, on their borders meet,
 (Monarchs of all claps'd, or unarriv'd !)
 As in debate, how best their powr's ally'd
 May swell the grandeur, or discharge the wrath,
 Of HIM, whom both their monarchies obey.

260 THE CONSOLATION:

His lamp, the sun, extinguish'd ; from beneath
 The frown of hideous darkness, calls his sons
 Time, this vast fabric for him built, (and doom'd
 With him to fall) *now* bursting o'er his head ;
 From their long slumber ; from earth's heaving womb
 To second birth ; contemporary throng !
 Rous'd at one call, upstarting from one bed,
 Prest in one croud, appal'd with one amaze,
 He turns them o'er, *eternity ! to thee.*
 Then (as a king depos'd disdains to live)
 He falls on his own scythe ; nor falls *alone* ;
 His greatest foe falls with him ; *time*, and he
 Who murder'd all *time's* offspring, *death*, expire.

Time was ! eternity now reigns alone !
 Awful eternity ! offended queen !
 And her resentment to mankind, how just !
 With kind intent soliciting access,
 How often has she knock'd at human hearts !
 Rich to repay their hospitality,
 How often call'd ! and with the voice of God !
 Yet bore repulse, excluded as a cheat !
 A dream ! while foulest foes found welcome *there !*
 A dream, a cheat, *now*, all things, but *her* smile.
 For, lo ! her twice ten thousand gates thrown wide,
 As thrice from *Indus* to the frozen pole,
 With banners, streaming as the *comet's* blaze,
 And clarions, louder than the *deep* in storms,
 Sonorous, as immortal breath can blow,
 Pour forth their myriads, potentates, and powers,
 Of light, of darkness ; in a middle field,
 Wide, as *creation !* populous, as wide !
 A neutral region ! there to mark th'event
 Of that great drama, whose preceding scenes
 Detain'd them close spectators, thro' a length

Of ages, ripening to this grand result;
Ages, as yet unnumber'd, but by GOD;
Who now, pronouncing sentence, vindicates
The rights of virtue, and his own renown.

Eternity, the various sentence-past,
Assigns the sever'd throng distinct abodes,
Sulphureous, or ambrosial: what ensues?
The deed predominant! the deed of deeds!
Which makes a hell of hell, a heav'n of heaven.
The goddess, with determin'd aspect, turns
Her adamant key's enormous size
Thro' destiny's inextricable wards,
Deep-driving ev'ry bolt, on both their fates.
Then, from the crystal battlements of heav'n,
Down, down, she hurls it thro' the dark profound,
Ten thousand thousand fathom; there to rust,
And ne'er unlock her resolution more.

The deep resounds, and hell, thro' all her glooms,
Returns, in groans, the melancholy roar.

O how unlike the chorus of the skies!
O how unlike those shouts of joy, that shake
The whole *Ethereal*! how the concave rings!
Nor strange! when deities their voice exalt;
And louder far, than when *creation* rose,
To see *creation's* godlike aim, and end,
So well accomplish'd! so divinely clos'd!
To see the mighty *dramatist's* last act
(As meet) in glory rising o'er the rest.
No fancy'd GOD, a GOD *indeed*, descends
To solve all *knots*; to strike the *moral* home;
To throw full day on darkest scenes of *time*;
To clear, commend, exalt, and crown, the Whole.
Hence, in one peal of loud, eternal praise,
The charm'd spectators thunder their applause;

262 THE CONSOLATION:

And the vast void beyond, applause resounds.

WHAT THEN AM I——

Amidst applauding worlds,
And worlds celestial, is there found on earth,
A peevish, dissonant, rebellious string,
Which jars in the grand chorus, and *complains*?
Censure on thee, Lorenzo! I suspend,
And turn it on *myself*; how greatly due!
All, all is *right*, by God ordain'd, or done;
And who, but God, resum'd the friends *He* gave?
And have I been *complaining*, then, so long?
Complaining of his *favours*; *pain*, and *death*?
Who, without *pain*'s advice, would e'er be good?
Who, without *death*, but would be good in vain?
Pain is to save from *pain*; all punishment,
To make for *peace*; and death to save from *death*;
And second death, to guard immortal life;
To rouse the careless, the presumptuous awe,
And turn the tide of souls another way;
By the same tenderness divine ordain'd,
That planted *Eden*, and high-bloom'd for man,
A fairer *Eden*, endless, in the skies.

Heaven gives us friends to bless the *present* scene;
Resumes them, to prepare us for the *next*.
All evils *natural* are *moral* goods;
All discipline, *indulgence*, on the whole.
None are unhappy; *all* have cause to smile,
But such as to themselves that cause deny.
Our *faults* are at the bottom of our *pains*;
Error, in *act*, or *judgement*, is the source
Of endless sighs: we *sin*, or we *mistake*,
And *nature* tax, when false *opinion* stings.
Let impious grief be banish'd, joy indulg'd;
But chiefly *then*, when grief puts in her claim.

Joy from the *joyous*, frequently betrays,
 Oft lives in vanity, and dies in woe.
 Joy, *amidst* *ills*, corroborates, exalts;
 'Tis joy, and conquest; joy, and virtue too.
 A noble fortitude in *ills* delights
 Heav'n, earth, ourselves; 'tis duty, glory, peace.
Affliction is the good man's shining scene;
Prosperity conceals his brightest ray;
 As *night* to stars, *woe* lustre gives to man.
 Heroes in battle, pilots in the storm,
 And virtue in calamities, admire,
 The crown of manhood is a winter-joy;
 An evergreen, that stands the *northern* blast,
 And blossoms in the rigour of our fate.

'Tis a prime part of happiness, to know
 How much unhappiness *must* prove our lot;
 A part which few possess! I'll pay life's tax,
 Without one rebel murmur, from this hour,
 Nor think it misery to be a *man*;
 Who thinks *it is*, shall never be a *god*.
 Some ills we wish for, when we wish to live.

What spoke *proud passion*?--" * With my being lost!"
 Presumptuous! blasphemous! absurd! and false!
 The triumph of my soul is,---that I *am*;
 And therefore that I *may* be---*what*? *Lorenzo*!
 Look inward, and look deep; and deeper still;
 Unfathomably deep our treasure runs
 In golden veins, thro' all eternity!
 Ages, and ages, and succeeding still
 New ages, *where* this phantom of an hour,
 Which courts, each night, dull slumber for repair,
 Shall wake, and wonder, and exult, and praise,
 And fly thro' infinite, and all unlock;

* Referring to the first night.

264 THE CONSOLATION:

And (if deserv'd) by Heav'n's redundant love,
 Made half-adorable itself, adore ;
 And find, in adoration, endless joy !
 Where thou, not master of a moment *here*,
 Frail as the flow'r, and fleeting as the gale,
 May'st boast a *whole eternity*, enrich'd
 With all a *kind Omnipotence* can pour.
 Since *Adam* fell, no mortal, un-inspir'd,
 Has ever yet conceiv'd, or ever shall,
 How kind is God, how great (if good) is *man*.
 No man too largely from Heav'n's love can hope,
 If what is *hop'd* he labours to *secure*.

Ills ?--there are none : *All-gracious* ! none from *thee* ;
 From *man* full many ! num'rous is the race
 Of blackest ill, and those immortal too,
 Begot by *madness* on fair *liberty* ;
 Heav'n's daughter, hell-debauch'd ! *her* hand alone
 Unlocks destruction to the sons of men,
 Fast barr'd by *thine* ; high-wall'd with adamant,
 Guarded with terrors reaching to this world,
 And cover'd with the thunders of thy law ;
 Whose threats are *mercies*, whose injunctions, *guides*,
 Assisting, not restraining, *reason's* choice ;
 Whose sanctions, *unavoidable results*
 From nature's course, indulgently reveal'd ;
 If unreveal'd, more dang'rous, nor less sure.
 Thus, an indulgent father warns his sons,
 " Do this ; fly that,"---nor always tells the cause ;
 Pleas'd to reward, as duty to his will,
 A conduct needful to their own repose.

Great God of wonders ! (if, thy *love* survey'd
 Aught else the name of wonderful retains)
 What *rocks* are *these*, on which to build our trust ?
 Thy ways admit no blemish ; none I find ;

Or this alone---“*That none is to be found.*”
 Not one, to soften *cenfure's* hardy crime ;
 Not one, to palliate *peevish grief's* complaint,
 Who, like a *demon*, murm'ring from the duft,
 Dares into judgment call her judge.---*Supreme !*
 For *all* I blefs thee ; moft, for the *fevere* ;
 * *Her death---my own* at hand---the fiery gulph,
 That flaming bound of wrath omnipotent !
 It thunders ; —— but it thunders to preferve ;
 It ftrengthens what it ftrikes ; its wholefome dread
 Averts the dreaded pain ; its hideous groans
 Join heav'n's sweet Hallelujahs in *thy* praife,
 Great fource of good *alone !* how kind in all !
 In vengeance, kind ! *pain, death, Gehenna, fave.*

Thus, in thy world material, *mighty mind !*
 Not that alone which *folaces*, and *fhines*,
 The *rough* and *gloomy*, challenges our praife.
 The *winter* is as needful as the *fhpring* ;
 The *thunder*, as the *fun* ; a ftagnate mafs
 Of vapours breeds a peftilential air ;
 Nor more propitious the *Favonian* breeze
 To nature's health, than purifying ftorms ;
 The dread *Volcano* minifters to good.
 Its fmother'd flames might undermine the world.
 Loud *Aetnas* fulminate in love to man ;
Comets good omens are, when duly fcann'd ;
 And, in their ufe, *eclipfes* learn to fhine.

Man is responsible for *ills* receiv'd ;
 Thofe we call *wretched* are a chofen band,
 Compell'd to refuge in the *right*, for peace.
 Amid my lift of bleffings infinite,
 Stand this the foremoft, “*That my heart has bled.*”
 'Tis Heav'n's laft effort of good-will to man ;

Z

266 THE CONSOLATION:

When *pain* can't bless, heav'n quits us in despair.
 Who fails to grieve, when just occasion calls,
 Or grieves too much, deserves not to be blest;
 Inhuman, or effeminate, his heart;
Reason absolves the grief, which *reason* ends.
 May heav'n ne'er trust my friend with happiness,
 Till it has taught him how to bear it well,
 By previous pain; and made it *safe* to *smile*!
Such smiles are mine, and *such* may they remain;
 Nor hazard their extinction, from excess.
 My change of *heart* a change of *style* demands;
 'The *Consolation* cancels the *Complaint*,
 And makes a convert of my guilty song.

As when o'er-labour'd, and inclin'd to breathe,
 A panting traveller, some rising ground,
 Some small ascent, has gain'd, he turns him round,
 And measures with his eye the various vale,
 The fields, woods, meads, and rivers he has past;
 And, satiate of his journey, thinks of home
 Endear'd by distance, nor affects more toil;
 Thus I, though small, indeed, is that ascent
 The muse has gain'd, review the paths she trod;
 Various, extensive, beaten but by few;
 And, conscious of her prudence in repose,
 Pause; and with pleasure meditate an end,
 Though still remote; so fruitful is my theme.
 Thro' many a field of *moral*, and *divine*,
 The muse has stray'd; and much of *sorrow* seen
 In human ways; and much of *false* and *vain*;
 Which none, who travel this bad road, can miss.
 O'er *friends* *deceas'd* full heartily she wept;
 Of *love* *divine* the wonders she display'd;
 Prov'd man *immortal*; shew'd the *source* of *joy*;
 The *grand tribunal* rais'd; assign'd the bounds

Of *human grief*: in *few*, to close the whole,
The moral muse has shadow'd out a sketch,
Tho' not in form, nor with a *Raphael-stroke*,
Of *most* our weakness needs *believe*, or *do*,
In this our land of travel, and of hope,
For peace on *earth*, or prospect of the *skies*.

What then remains?—Much! much! a mighty debt
To be discharg'd: these thoughts, O *night*! are thine;
From thee they came, like lovers secret sighs,
While others slept. So, *Cynthia* (poets feign)
In shadows veil'd, soft-sliding from her sphere,
Her shepherd cheer'd; of her enamour'd leis,
Than I of thee.—And art thou still unsung,
Beneath whose brow, and by whose aid, I sing?
Immortal silence!—Where shall I begin?
Where end? or how steal music from the spheres,
To sooth their goddess?

O majestic *Night*!

Nature's great ancestor! *day's* elder-born!
And fated to survive the transient sun!
By mortals, and immortals, seen with awe!
A starry crown thy raven-brow adorns,
An azure zone, thy waist; clouds, in heav'n's loom
Wrought thro' varieties of shape and shade,
In ample folds of drapery divine,
Thy flowing mantle form, and, heav'n throughout,
Voluminously pour thy pompous train.
Thy gloomy grandeurs (*nature's* most august,
Inspiring aspect!) claim a grateful verse;
And, like a sable curtain starr'd with gold,
Drawn o'er my labours past, shall close the scene.

And what, O man! so *worthy* to be sung?
What more prepares us for the songs of heav'n?
Creation of archangels is the theme!

268 THE CONSOLATION:

What, to be sung, so *needful*? what so well
 Celestial joys prepares us to sustain?
 The soul of man, His face design'd to see,
Who gave these wonders to be seen by man,
 Has *here* a previous scene of objects *great*,
 On which to dwell; to stretch to that expanse
 Of thought, to rise, to that exalted height
 Of admiration, to contract that awe,
 And give her whole capacities that strength,
 Which best may qualify for *final* joy.
 The more our spirits are enlarg'd on *earth*,
 The deeper draught shall they receive of *heav'n*.

Heav'n's King! whose face unveil'd consummates
 Redundant bliss! which fills that mighty void, (bliss;
 The whole creation leaves in human hearts!
 Thou, who didst touch the lip of *Jesse's* son,
 Wrapt in sweet contemplation of these fires,
 And set his harp in concert with the spheres!
 While of thy works *material* the supreme
 I dare attempt, assist my daring song.
 Loose me from *earth's* inclosure, from the *sun's*
Contracted circle set my heart at large;
 Eliminate my spirit, give it range
 Through provinces of thought yet unexplor'd;
 Teach me, by this stupendous scaffolding,
 Creation's golden steps, to climb to Thee.
 Teach me with *art* great *nature* to controul,
 And spread a lustre o'er the shades of *night*.
 Feel I thy kind assent? and shall the *sun*
 Be seen at *midnight*, rising in my song?

Lorenzo! come, and warm thee: thou, whose heart,
 Whose *little* heart, is moor'd within a nook
 Of this obscure terrestrial, anchor weigh.
 Another ocean calls, a *nobler* port;

I am thy pilot, *I* thy prosperous gale.

Gainful thy voyage through yon azure main;
Main, without tempest, pirate, rock, or shore;
And whence thou may'st import *eternal* wealth;
And leave to *beggar'd* minds the *pearl* and *gold*.
Thy travels dost thou boast o'er foreign realms?
Thou *stranger* to the *world*! thy tour *begin*;
Thy tour through *nature's* universal orb.

Nature delineates her whole chart at large,
On soaring souls, that sail among the sphere;
And *man* how purblind, if unknown the whole?
Who circles spacious *earth*, than travels *here*,
Shall own, he never was from *home* before!
Come, my * *Prometheus*, from thy pointed rock
Of *false* ambition if unchain'd, we'll mount;
We'll, *innocently*, steal celestial fire,
And kindle our devotion at the *stars*;
A theft, that shall not chain, but set thee free.

Above our atmosphere's intestine wars,
Rain's fountain-head, the magazine of hail,
Above the northern nests of feather'd snows,
The brew of thunders, and the flaming forge
That forms the crooked lightning; 'bove the *caves*
Where infant tempests wait their growing wings,
And tune their tender voices to that roar,
Which soon, perhaps, shall shake a guilty world;
Above misconstru'd omens of the sky,
Far-travell'd comets calculated blaze,
E lance thy thought, and think of *more* than *man*.
Thy soul, till now, contracted, wither'd, shrunk,
Blighted by blasts of *earth's* unwholesome air,
Will blossom *here*; spread all her faculties
To these bright ardors; ev'ry power unfold.

Z 3

* Night the Eighth.

270 THE CONSOLATION:

And rise into sublimities of thought ;
 Stars *teach*, as well as *shine*. At nature's birth,
 Thus, their commission ran----" Be kind to *man*."
 Where art thou, poor benighted traveller !
 The *stars* will light thee ; tho' the *moon* should fail.
 Where art thou, more benighted ! more astray !
 In ways immortal ? the *stars* call thee back ;
 And, if obey'd their counsel, set thee right.

This prospect vast, what is it ?---weigh'd aright,
 'Tis nature's system of divinity,
 And ev'ry student of the *night* inspires.
 'Tis elder scripture, writ by God's own hand ;
 Scripture authentic ! uncorrupt by man.
 Lorenzo ! with my *radius* (the rich gift
 Of thought nocturnal !) I'll point out to thee
 Its various lessons ; some that may surprise
 An un-adept in mysteries of *night* ;
 Little, perhaps, expected in *her* school,
 Nor thought to grow on planet, or on star.
 Bulls, lions, scorpions, monsters here we feign ;
 Ourselves more monstrous, not to see what here
 Exists indeed ;---a lecture to mankind.

What read we *here* ?---th' existence of a God ?---
 Yes ; and of other beings, man above ;
 Natives of *Ether* ! sons of higher climes !
 And, what may move Lorenzo's wonder more,
 Eternity is written in the skies.
 And whose eternity ?--- Lorenzo ! *thine* ;
 Mankind's eternity. Nor *faith* alone,
 Virtue grows here ; *here* springs the sov'reign cure
 Of almost ev'ry vice ; but chiefly *thine* ;
 Wrath, pride, ambition, and impure desire.

Lorenzo ! thou canst wake at midnight too,
 Tho' not on *morals* bent : ambition, pleasure !

Those tyrants I for thee so * lately fought,
Afford their harrafs'd slaves but slender rest.
Thou, to whom midnight is *immoral* noon,
And the sun's noon-tide blaze, prime dawn of day;
Not by thy climate, but capricious crime,
Commencing one of our *Antipodes*!
In thy nocturnal rove, one moment halt,
'Twixt stage and stage, of riot, and cabal;
And lift thine eye (if bold an eye to lift,
If bold to meet the face of injur'd Heav'n)
To yonder stars: for other ends they shine,
Than to light revellers from shame to shame,
And, thus, be made accomplices in guilt.

Why from yon arch, that infinite of space,
With infinite of lucid orbs replete,
Which set the living firmament on fire.
At the first glance, in such an overwhelm
Of wonderful, on man's astonish'd sight,
Rushes *Omnipotence*?—to curb our *pride*;
Our *reason* rouse, and lead it to that pow'r,
Whose love lets down these silver chains of light;
To draw up man's *ambition* to *himself*,
And bind our *chaste affections* to his throne.
Thus the three virtues, least alive on earth,
And welcom'd on heav'n's coast with most applause,
An *humble*, *pure*, and *heav'nly-minded* heart,
Are *here* inspir'd:—and canst thou gaze too long?

Nor stands thy *wrath* depriv'd of its reproof,
Or un-upbraided by this radiant choir.
The planets of each system represent
Kind neighbours; mutual amity prevails;
Sweet interchange of rays, receiv'd, return'd;
Enlight'ning, and enlighten'd! all, at once.

272 THE CONSOLATION:

Attracting, and attracted ! patriot-like,
 None sins against the welfare of the whole ;
 But their reciprocal, unselfish aid,
 Affords an emblem of *millennial* love.
 Nothing in nature, much less *conscious* being,
 Was e'er created solely for itself :
 Thus man his *sovereign* duty learns in this
Material picture of benevolence.

And know, of all our supercilious race,
 Thou most inflammable ! thou wasp of men !
 Man's angry heart, *inspected*, would be found
 As rightly set, as are the starry spheres ;
 'Tis *nature's* structure, broke by stubborn *will*,
 Breeds all that un-celestial discord *there*.
 Wilt thou not feel the bias *nature* gave ?
 Canst thou descend from converse with the skies,
 And seize thy brother's throat ?—for what—a *clod*,
 An inch of *earth* ? the *planets* cry, “ Forbear,”
 They chace our double darkness ; *nature's* gloom,
 And (kinder still !) our *intellectual* night.

And see, *day's* amiable sister sends
 Her invitation, in the softest rays
 Of mitigated lustre ; courts thy sight,
 Which suffers from her tyrant-brother's blaze.
Night grants thee the full freedom of the skies,
 Nor rudely reprimands thy lifted eye ;
 With *gain*, and *joy*, she bribes thee to be wise.
Night opes the noblest scenes, and shades an awe,
 Which gives those venerable scenes full weight,
 And deep reception, in th' intender'd heart ;
 While light peeps thro' the darkness, like a spy ;
 And darkness shews its grandeur by the light.
 Nor is the *profit* greater than the *joy*,
 If human hearts at glorious objects glow.

And admiration can inspire delight.

What speak I more, than I, this moment, feel?

With pleasing stupor first the soul is struck

(Stupor ordain'd to make her truly wise!)

Then into transport starting from her trance,

With love, and admiration, how she glows!

This gorgeous apparatus! this display!

This ostentation of creative power!

This theatre!—what eye can take it in?

By what divine enchantment was it rais'd,

For minds of the first magnitude to launch

In endless speculation, and adore?

One sun by day, by night *ten thousand* shine;

And light us deep into the Deity,

How boundless in magnificence and might?

O what a confluence of ethereal fires,

From urns un-number'd, down the steep of heav'n,

Streams to a point, and centres in my sight!

Nor tarries *there*; I feel it at my heart.

My heart, at once, it humbles, and exalts;

Lays it in dust, and calls it to the skies.

Who sees it unexalted, and unaw'd?

Who sees it, and can stop at what is seen?

Material offspring of *Omnipotence*!

Inanimate, all-animating birth!

Work worthy *him* who made it! worthy praise!

All praise! praise *more* than human! nor deny'd

Thy praise *divine*!—but tho' man, drown'd in sleep,

With-holds his homage, not *alone* I wake;

Bright legions swarm unseen, and sing, unheard

By mortal ear, the glorious architect,

In this his universal temple, hung

With lustres, and with innumerable lights,

That shed religion on the soul; at once,

274 THE CONSOLATION:

The temple, and the preacher ! O how loud
It calls devotion ! genuine growth of night !

Devotion ! daughter of astronomy !

An undevout astronomer is mad.

True ; all things speak a GOD ; but in the small,
Men trace out *him* ; in great, *he* seizes man.

Seizes, and elevates, and raps, and fills

With new inquiries, 'mid associates new.

Tell me, ye stars ; ye planets ! tell me, all

Ye starr'd, and planeted, inhabitants ! what is it ?

What are these sons of wonder ? say, proud arch !

(Within whose azure palaces they dwell)

Built with divine ambition ! in disdain

Of limit built ! built in the taste of Heaven !

Vast concave ! ample dome ! wast thou design'd

A meet apartment for the Deity ?---

Not so ; that thought alone thy state impairs,

Thy *lofty* sinks, and shallows thy *profound*,

And streightens thy *diffusive* ; dwarfs the whole,

And makes an universe an *orrery*.

But when I drop mine eye, and look on man,

Thy right regain'd, thy grandeur is restor'd,

O *nature* ! wide flies off th' expanding round.

As when whole magazines, at once, are fir'd,

The smitten air is hollow'd by the blow ;

The vast explosion dissipates the clouds ;

Shock'd æther's billows dash the distant skies ;

Thus (but far more) th' expanding round flies off,

And leaves a mighty void, a spacious womb,

Might teem with new creation ; re-inflam'd

Thy luminaries triumph, and assume

Divinity themselves. Nor was it strange,

Matter high-wrought to such surprizing pomp,

Such godlike glory, stole the stile of gods.

From ages dark, obtuse, and steep'd in *sense* ;
 For, sure, to *sense*, they truly are divine,
 And half-absolv'd idolatry from guilt ;
 Nay, turn'd it into virtue. Such it *was*
 In those, who put forth all they had of *man*.
 Unlost, to lift their thought, nor mounted higher ;
 But, weak of wing, on planets perch'd ; and thought
 What was their highest, must be their ador'd.

But they how *weak*, who could no higher mount ?
 And are there, then, *Lorenzo* ! those, to whom
 Unseen, and unexistent, are the same ?
 And if incomprehensible is join'd,
 Who dare pronounce it madness, to *believe* ?
 Why has the mighty BUILDER thrown aside
 All measure in his work ; stretch'd out his line
 So far, and spread amazement o'er the whole ?
 Then (as he took delight in wide extremes)
 Deep in the bosom of his universe,
 Dropt down that *reasoning* mite, that insect, *man*,
 To crawl, and gaze, and wonder at the scene ?---
 That man might ne'er presume to plead amazement
 For disbelief of wonders in *himself*.
 Shall GOD be less miraculous, than what
 His hand has form'd ? shall *mysteries* descend
 From *un-mysterious* ? things more elevate,
 Be more familiar ? uncreated lye
 More obvious than created, to the grasp
 Of human thought ? the *more* of wonderful
 Is heard in *him*, the *more* we should assent.
 Could we conceive *him*, GOD he could not be ;
 Or *he* not GOD, or *we* could not be *men*.
 A GOD alone can comprehend a GOD ;
Man's distance how immense ? On *such* a theme,
 Know this, *Lorenzo* ! (seem it ne'er so strange)

276 THE CONSOLATION:

Nothing can *satisfy*, but what *confounds* ;
 Nothing but what *astonishes*, is *true*.
 The scene thou seest attests the truth I sing,
 And ev'ry star sheds light upon thy creed.
 These stars, this furniture, this coast of heav'n,
 If but *reported*, thou hadst ne'er believ'd ;
 But thine *eye* tells thee, the *romance* is true.
 The grand of nature is th' Almighty's oath,
 In *reason's* court, to silence *unbelief*.
 How my mind, op'ning at this scene, imbibes
 The moral emanations of the skies,
 While nought, perhaps, *Lorenzo* less admires !
 Has the great Sov'reign sent ten thousand worlds
 To tell us, *He* resides above them all,
 In glory's unapproachable recess ?
 And dare *earth's* bold inhabitants deny
 The sumptuous, the magnificent embassy
 A moment's audience ? turn we, nor will hear
 From whom they come, or what they would impart
 For man's emolument ; sole cause that stoops
 Their grandeur to man's eye ? *Lorenzo* ! rouse ;
 Let thought, awaken'd, take the light'ning's wing,
 And glance from east to west, from pole to pole.
 Who sees, but is confounded, or convinc'd ?
 Renounces *reason*, or a GOD adores ?
 Mankind was sent into the world to *see* :
 Sight gives the science needful to their peace ;
 That obvious science asks *small* learning's aid.
 Wouldst thou on metaphysic pinions soar ?
 Or wound thy patience amid logic thorns ?
 Or travel history's enormous round ?
Nature no such hard task enjoins : she gave
 A make to man directive of his thought ;
 A make set upright, pointing to the stars,

As who should say, "Read thy chief lesson there."
Too late to read this manuscript of heav'n,
When, like a parchment-scroll, shrunk up by flames,
It folds *Lorenzo's* lesson from his sight.

Lesson how various ! not the God alone,
I see his *ministers* ; I see, diffus'd
In radiant orders, essences sublime,
Of various offices, of various plume,
In heav'nly liveries, distinctly, clad,
Azure, green, purple, pearl, or downy gold,
Or all conmix'd ; they stand, with wings outspread,
List'ning to catch the master's least command,
And fly thro' *nature*, ere the moment ends ;
Numbers innumerable !——well conceiv'd
By *Pagan*, and by *Christian* ! o'er each sphere
Presides an angel, to direct its course,
And feed, or fan, its flames ; or to discharge
Other high trust unknown. For who can see
Such pomp of matter, and imagine, *mind*,
For which *alone* inanimate was made,
More sparingly dispens'd ? that nobler son,
Far liker the greater Sire !——'Tis thus the skies
Inform us of superiors numberless,
As much, in *excellence*, above mankind,
As above *earth*, in *magnitude*, the *spheres*.
These, as a cloud of witnesses, hang o'er us ;
In a throng'd theatre are all our deeds ;
Perhaps, a thousand demigods descend
On ev'ry beam we see, to walk with men.
Awful reflection ! strong restraint from ill !

Yet *here*, our virtue finds still stronger aid
From these ethereal glories *sense* surveys.
Something, like magic, strikes from this blue vault ;
With just attention is it view'd ; we feel

278 THE CONSOLATION:

A sudden succour, un-implor'd, un-thought ;
Nature herself does half the work of *man*.
 Seas, rivers, mountains, forests, deserts, rocks,
 The promontory's height, the depth profound
 Of subterranean, excavated grotts,
 Black-brow'd, and vaulted-high, and yawning wide
 From *nature's* structure, or the scoop of *time* ;
 If ample of dimension, vast of size,
 Ev'n *these* an aggrandizing impulse give ;
 Of solemn thought enthusiastic heights
 Ev'n *these* infuse.---But what of vast in *these* ?
 Nothing ;---or we must own the skies forgot.
 Much less in *art*.---Vain *art* ! thou pygmy-pow'r !
 How dost thou swell, and strut, with human pride,
 To shew thy littleness ! what childish toys,
 Thy watry columns squirted to the clouds !
 Thy basen'd rivers, and imprison'd seas !
 Thy mountains moulded into forms of men !
 Thy hundred-gated *capitals* ! or those
 Where three days travel left us much to ride ;
 Gazing on miracles by mortals wrought,
 Arches triumphal, theatres immense,
 Or nodding *gardens* pendent in mid-air !
 Or *temples* proud to meet their Gods half-way !
 Yet *these* affect us in no common kind.
 What then the force of such superior scenes !
 Enter a temple, it will strike an awe :
 What awe from this the Deity has built !
 A good man seen, tho' silent, counsel gives :
 The touch'd spectator wishes to be wise :
 In a bright mirror his own hands have made,
 Here we see something like the face of God.
 Seems it not then enough, to say, *Lorenzo* !
 To man abandon'd, " Hast thou seen the skies ?"

And yet, so thwarted nature's kind design
By daring man, he makes her sacred awe
(That guard from ill) his shelter, his temptation
To more than common guilt, and quite inverts
Celestial art's intent. The trembling stars
See crimes gigantic, stalking thro' the gloom
With front erect, that hide their head by day,
And making night still *darker* by their deeds.
Slumb'ring in covert, till the shades descend,
Rapine, and *murder*, link'd, now prowl for prey.
The miser earths his treasure; and the thief,
Watching the mole, half-beggars him ere morn.
Now *plots*, and foul *conspiracies*, awake;
And, muffling up their horrors from the moon,
Havock and devastation they prepare,
And kingdoms tott'ring in the field of blood.
Now sons of riot in mid-revel rage.
What shall I do? --- suppress it? or proclaim? ---
Why *sleeps* the thunder? now, *Lorenzo*! now,
His best friend's couch the rank adulterer
Ascends secure; and laughs at gods and men.
Prepost'rous madmen, void of fear or shame,
Lay their crimes bare to these chaste eyes of heav'n;
Yet shrink, and shudder, at a mortal's sight.
Were moon, and stars, for villains *only* made?
To *guide*, yet *screen* them, with tenebrious light?
No; they were made to fashion the sublime
Of human hearts, and *wiser* make the *wife*.

Those ends were answer'd once; when mortals liv'd
Of stronger wing, of aquiline ascent
In theory sublime. O how unlike
Those vermin of the night, this moment fung,
Who crawl on *earth*, and on her venom feed!
Those antient sages, *human* stars! they met

280 THE CONSOLATION:

Their brothers of the *skies*, at mid-night hour;
 Their counsel ask'd; and, what they ask'd, *obey'd*.
 The *Stagyrite*, and *Plato*, he who drank
 The poison'd bowl, and he of *Tusculum*,
 With him of *Corduba*, (immortal names!)
 In these unbounded, and *Elysian*, walks,
 An area fit for Gods, and godlike men,
 They took their nightly round, thro' radiant paths
 By *Seraphs* trod; instructed, chiefly thus,
 To tread in their bright footsteps here below;
 To walk in worth still brighter than the *skies*.
 There they contracted their contempt of *earth*;
 Of hopes eternal kindled, *there*, the fire;
 There, as in near approach, they glow'd, and grew
 (Great visitants!) more intimate with God,
 More worth to *men*, more joyous to *themselves*.
 Thro' various *virtues*, they, with ardour, ran
 The *Zodiac* of their learn'd, illustrious lives.

In *Christian* hearts, O for a *pagan* zeal!
 A needful, but *opprobrious* pray'r! as much
 Our *ardor* less, as greater is our *light*.
 How monstrous this in *morals*! scarce more strange
 Would this *phaenomenon* in nature strike,
 A *sun*, that froze us, or a *star*, that warm'd.

What taught these heroes of the moral world?
 To these thou giv'st thy *praise*, give *credit* too.
 These doctors ne'er were pension'd to deceive thee;
 And *pagan* tutors are thy taste.---They taught,
 That, narrow views betray to misery:
 That, wise it is to comprehend the whole:
 That, *virtue* rose from *nature*, ponder'd well,
 The single base of *virtue* built to heav'n:
 That, God, and *nature*, our attention claim:
 That, *nature* is the glass reflecting God,

As, by the *sea*, reflected is the *sun*,
 Too glorious to be gaz'd on in his sphere :
 That, *mind immortal*, loves *immortal aims* :
 That, *boundless mind* affects a *boundless space* :
 That, vast surveys, and the sublime of things,
 The soul assimilate, and make her great :
 That, therefore, heav'n her glories, as a fund
 Of inspiration, thus spreads out to man.
 Such are their doctrines ; *such* the *night inspir'd*.

And what more true ? what truth of greater weight ?
 The soul of man was made to walk the skies ;
 Delightful outlet of her prison *here* !
 There, disincumber'd from her chains, the ties
 Of toys terrestrial, she can rove at large ;
 There, freely can respire, dilate, extend,
 In full proportion let loose all her pow'rs ;
 And, *undeluded*, grasp at something great.
 Nor, as a stranger, does she wander there ;
 But wonderful herself, thro' wonder strays ;
 Contemplating *their grandeur*, finds *her own* ;
 Dives deep in their oeconomy divine,
 Sits high in judgment on their various laws,
 And, like a master, judges not amiss.
 Hence greatly pleas'd, and justly proud, the soul
 Grows conscious of her birth celestial ; breathes
 More life, more vigour, in her native air ;
 And feels herself *at home* among the stars ;
 And, feeling, emulates her country's praise.

What call we, then, the firmament, *Lorenzo!*—
 As *earth* the body, since, the *skies* sustain
 The soul with food, that gives immortal life,
 Call it, the noble pasture of the *mind* ;
 Which there expatiates, strengthens, and exults,
 And riots thro' the luxuries of thought.

282 THE CONSOLATION:

Call it, the garden of the Deity,
 Blossom'd with stars, redundant in the growth
 Of fruit ambrosial; *moral* fruit to man.

Call it, the breast-plate of the true high-priest,
 Ardent with gems oracular, that give,
 In points of highest moment, right response;
 And ill-neglected, if we prize our peace.

Thus, have we found a *true* astrology;
 Thus, have we found a new, a noble sense,
 In which *alone* stars govern human fates.

O that the *stars* (as some have feign'd) let fall
 Bloodshed, and havock, on embattel'd realms,
 And rescu'd *monarchs* from so black a guilt!

Bourbon! this with how gen'rous in a foe!

Wouldst thou be great, wouldst thou become a god,

And stick thy deathless name among the stars,

For mighty conquests on a needle's point?

Instead of forging chains for *foreigners*,

Bastile thy tutor: grandeur all thy aim?

As yet thou know'st not what it is: how great,

How glorious, *then*, appears the *mind* of man,

When in it all the stars, and planets, roll!

And what it *seems*, it is: great objects make

Great minds, enlarging as their views enlarge;

Those still more godlike, as *these* more divine.

And *more* divine than *these*, thou canst not see.

Daz'd, o'erpower'd, with the delicious draught

Of miscellaneous splendors, how I reel

From thought to thought, inebriate, without end!

An *Eden*, this! a *paradise* unlost!

I meet the Deity in ev'ry view,

And tremble at my nakedness before him!

O that I could but reach the *tree of life*!

For *here* it grows, unguarded from our taste;

No *flaming-sword* denies our entrance *here* ;
Would man but gather, he might *live for ever*.

Lorenzo ! much of *moral* hast thou seen.
Of curious arts art thou more fond ? then mark
The *mathematic* glories of the skies,
In number, weight, and measure, all ordain'd.
Lorenzo's boasted builders, *chance*, and *fate*,
Are left to finish his aerial towers ;
Wisdom, and *choice*, their well-known characters
Here deep-impres ; and claim it for their own.
Tho' splendid all, no splendor void of use ;
Use rivals *beauty* ; *art* contends with *pow'r* ;
No wanton waste, amid effuse expence ;
The great *Oeconomist* adjusting all
To prudent pomp, magnificently wise.
How rich the prospect ! and for ever new !
And *newest* to the man that views it *most* ;
For newer still in infinite succeeds.
Then, these aerial racers, O how swift !
How the shaft *loiters* from the strongest string !
Spirit alone can distance the career.
Orb above orb ascending without end !
Circle in circle, without end, inclos'd !
Wheel within wheel ; *Ezekiel* ! like to thine !
Like thine, it seems a vision, or a dream ;
Tho' *seen*, we labour to believe it *true* !
What involution ! what extent ! what swarms
Of worlds, that laugh at *earth* ! immensely great !
Immensely distant from each other's spheres !
What then, the wond'rous *space* thro' which they roll ?
At once it quite ingulphs all human thought !
'Tis comprehension's absolute defeat.

Nor think thou seest a wild disorder here ;
Thro' illustrious chaos to the light,

284 THE CONSOLATION:

Arrangement neat, and chastest order, reign.
 The path prescrib'd, inviolably kept,
 Upbraids the lawless fallies of mankind.
 Worlds, ever thwarting, never interfere;
 What knots are ty'd! how soon are they dissolv'd,
 And set the seeming marry'd planets free!
 They rove for ever, without error rove;
 Confusion unconfus'd! nor less admire
 This tumult untumultuous; all on wing!
 In motion, all! yet what profound repose!
 What fervid action, yet no noise! as aw'd
 To silence, by the presence of their Lord;
 Or hush'd, by *his* command, in love to man.
 And bid let fall soft beams on human rest,
 Restless themselves. On yon coerulean plain,
 In exultation to *their* God, and *thine*,
 They dance, they sing eternal jubilee,
 Eternal celebration of *his* praise.
 But, since their *song* arrives not at our ear,
 Their *dance* perplex'd exhibits to the sight
 Fair *hieroglyphic* of *his* peerless power.
 Mark, how the *labyrinthian* turns they take,
 The circles intricate, mystic and maze,
 Weave the grand cypher of *Omnipotence*;
 To *gods*, how great! how legible to *man*!

Leaves so much wonder greater wonder still?
 Where are the pillars that support the skies?
 What more than *Atlantean* shoulder props
 Th' incumbent load? what magic, what strange art,
 In fluid air these pond'rous orbs sustains!
 Who would not think them hung in golden chains?—
 And so they are; in the high will of Heav'n,
 Which fixes all; makes adamant of air,
 Or air of adamant; makes all of nought.

Or nought of all ; if *such* the dread decree.

Imagine from their deep foundations torn
The most gigantic sons of earth, the broad
And tow'ring *Alps*, all tost into the sea ;
And, light as down, or volatile as air,
Their bulks enormous dancing on the waves,
In time, and measure, exquisite ; while all
The winds, in emulation of the spheres,
Tune their sonorous instruments aloft ;
The concert swell, and animate the ball.
Would this appear amazing ? what, then, worlds,
In a far thinner element sustain'd,
And acting the same part, with greater skill,
More rapid movement, and for noblest ends ?

More *obvious* ends to pass, are not these stars
The seats majestic, proud imperial thrones,
On which angelic delegates of heav'n,
At certain periods, as the *sov'reign* nods,
Discharge high trusts of *vengeance*, or of *love*,
To clothe, in outward grandeur, grand design,
And acts most solemn still more solemnize ?

Ye citizens of air ! what ardent thanks,
What full effusion of the grateful heart,
Is due from man indulg'd in such a sight !
A sight so noble ! and a sight so kind !
It drops *new* truths at ev'ry *new* survey !
Feels not *Lorenzo* something stir within,
That sweeps away all period ? as these spheres
Measure duration, they no less inspire
The godlike hope of ages without end.
The boundless *space*, thro' which these rovers take
Their restless roam, suggests the sister-thought
Of boundless *time*. Thus, by kind *nature's* skill,
To man un-labour'd, that important guest,

286 THE CONSOLATION:

Eternity, finds entrance at the *sight* :
 And an *eternity*, for man ordain'd,
 Of these his destin'd midnight-counsellors,
 The *stars*, had never whisper'd it to man.
Nature informs, but ne'er insults, her sons.
 Could she then kindle the most ardent wish
 To *disappoint* it?—that is blasphemy.
 Thus, of thy creed a second article,
 Momentous, as th' existence of a God,
 Is found (as I conceive) where rarely sought ;
 And thou mayst read thy *soul immortal*, here.

Here, then, *Lorenzo* ! on these glories dwell ;
 Nor want the gilt, illuminated, roof,
 That calls the wretched gay to dark delights.
Assemblies ?—this is one divinely bright ?
 Here, un-endanger'd in health, wealth, or fame,
 Range thro' the fairest, and the *Sultan* scorn.
He, wise as *thou*, no *crescent* holds so fair,
 As that, which on his turbant awes a world ;
 And thinks the *moon* is proud to copy him.
 Look on her, and gain more than worlds can give,
 A mind superior to the charms of *power*.
 Thou muffled in delusions of this life !
 Can yonder *moon* turn ocean in his bed,
 From side to side, in constant ebb, and flow,
 And purify from stench his watry-realms ?
 And fails her *moral* influence ? wants she power
 To turn *Lorenzo's* stubborn tide of thought
 From stagnating on *earth's* infected shore,
 And purge from nuisance his corrupted heart ?
 Fails her attraction when it draws to heav'n ?
 Nay, and to what thou valu'st more, *earth's* joy ?
 Minds elevate, and panting for *unseen*,
 And defecate from *sense*, alone obtain

Full relish of existence un-deflower'd,
The *life* of life, the *zest* of worldly bliss.
All else on earth amounts — to what? to *this*;
“ *Bad* to be *suffer'd*; *blessings* to be *left* :”
Earth's richest inventory boasts no more.

Of higher scenes be, then, the call obey'd.
O let me gaze !---of gazing there's no end.
O let me think ! — thought too is wilder'd *here* :
In mid-way flight imagination tires ;
Ye soon re-prunes her wing to soar anew,
Her point unable to forbear, or gain ;
So *great* the pleasure so *profound* the plan !
A banquet, this, where men, and angels, meet,
Eat the same *manna*, mingle earth and heav'n.
How distant some of these nocturnal suns !
So distant (says the sage) 'twere not absurd
To doubt, if beams, set out at *nature's* birth,
Are yet arriv'd at this so foreign world ;
Tho' nothing half so rapid as their flight.
An eye of awe and wonder let me roll,
And roll *for ever* : who can satiate sight
In *such* a scene ? in such an ocean wide
Of deep astonishment ? where depth, height, breadth,
Are lost in their extremes ; and where to count
The thick-sown glories in this field of fire,
Perhaps a *seraph's* computation fails.
Now, go, *ambition* ! boast thy boundless might
In conquest, o'er the tenth part of a grain.

And yet *Lorenzo* calls for miracles,
To give his tott'ring faith a solid base.
Why call for less than is *already* thine ?
Thou art no novice in theology ;
What is a *miracle* ? — 'tis a reproach,
* 'Tis an implicit satire, on mankind ;

288 THE CONSOLATION;

And while it *satisfies*, it *censures* too.

To common-sense, great *nature's* course proclaims

A Deity : when mankind falls asleep,

A *miracle* is sent, as an alarm,

To wake the world, and prove *Him* o'er again,

By *recent* argument, but not more *strong*.

Say, which imports more plenitude of power,

Or nature's laws to *fix*, or to *repeal*?

To *make* a sun, or *stop* his mid-career?

To countermand his orders, and send back

The flaming courier to the frightened *east*,

Warm'd, and astonish'd, at his ev'ning ray?

Or bid the *moon*, as with her journey tir'd,

In *Ajalon's* soft, flow'ry vale repose?

Great things are these ; still greater, to *create*.

From *Adam's* bow'r look down thro' the whole train

Of miracles ;——resistless is their power?

They do not, *can* not, more amaze the mind,

Than this, *call'd* unmiraculous survey,

If *duly* weigh'd, if *rationally* seen,

If seen with *human* eyes. The *brute*, indeed,

Sees nought but *spangles* here ; the *fool*, no more,

Say'st thou, “ The course of *nature* governs all?

The *course* of *nature* is the *art* of God.

The miracles thou call'st for, *this* attests ;

For say, could *nature* *nature's* course controul?

But, miracles apart, who sees Him not,

Nature, *Controuler*, *Author*, *guide*, and *end*?

Who turns his eye on *nature's* midnight-face,

But must inquire——“ What hand behind the scene,

“ What arm almighty, put these wheeling globes

“ In motion, and wound up the vast machine?

“ Who rounded in his palm these spacious orbs?

“ Who bowl'd them flaming thro' the dark profound,

" Num'rous as glitt'ring gems of morning-dew,
 " Or sparks from populous cities in a blaze,
 " And set the bosom of *old night* on fire?
 " Peopl'd her desert, and made horror *smile*?"
 Or, if the military stile delights thee,
 (For stars have fought their battles, leagu'd with man)
 " Who marshals this bright host? enrolls their names?
 " Appoints their posts, their marches, and returns,
 " Punctual, at stated periods? who disbands
 " These vet'ran troops, their final duty done,
 " If e'er disbanded?"----*He*, whose potent word,
 Like the loud trumpet, levy'd first their powers
 In *night*'s inglorious empire, where they slept
 In beds of darkness; arm'd them with fierce flames,
 Arrang'd, and disciplin'd, and cloath'd in gold;
 And call'd them out of *Chaos* to the field,
 Where now they war with *vice* and *unbelief*.
 O let us join this army! joining these,
 Will give us hearts intrepid, at that hour,
 When *brighter* flames shall cut a *darker* night;
 When these strong demonstrations of a God
 Shall hide their heads, or tumble from their spheres,
 And one *eternal* curtain cover all!

Struck at *that* thought, as now awak'd, I lift
 A more enlighten'd eye, and read the stars
 To man still more propitious; and their aid
 (Tho' guiltless of idolatry) implore;
 Nor longer rob them of their noblest name.
 O ye *dividers of my time*! ye bright
 Accomptants of my days, and months, and years,
 In your fair kalendar distinctly mark'd!
 Since that authentic, radiant register,
 Tho' man inspects it not, stands good against him;
 Since *you*, and years, roll on, tho' man stands still;

290 THE CONSOLATION:

Teach me my days to number, and apply
My trembling heart to *wisdom*; now beyond
All shadows of excuse for fooling on.

Age smooths our path to prudence; sweeps aside
The snares, keen *appetite*, and *passion*, spread
To catch stray souls; and, woe to that grey head,
Whose *folly* would undo, what *age* has done!

Aid, then, aid, all ye stars!--much rather, Thou,
Great artist! *thou*, whose finger set aright
This exquisite *machine*, with all its *wheels*,
Tho' intervolv'd, exact; and pointing out
Life's rapid, and irrevocable flight,
With such an *index* fair, as none can miss,
Who lifts an eye, nor sleeps till it is clos'd.

Open *mine* eye, dread Deity! to read
The tacit doctrine of thy works; to see
Things as they *are*, un-alter'd thro' the glass
Of worldly wishes. *Time, eternity!*

('Tis these, mis-measur'd, ruin all mankind)
Set them before me; let me lay them both
In equal scale, and learn their various weight.

Let *time* appear a *moment*, as it is;

And let *eternity's* full orb, at once,

Turn on my soul, and strike it into heav'n.

When shall I see far more than charms me now?

Gaze on creation's model in *thy* breast

Unveil'd, nor wonder at the transcript more?

When, this vile, foreign, dust, which smothers all
That travel *earth's* deep vale, shall I shake off?

When shall my soul her incarnation quit,

And, re-adopted to thy blest embrace,

Obtain her *apotheosis* in Thee?

Dost think, *Lorenzo!* tis is wandring wide?

No, 'tis directly striking at the mark;

To wake thy *dead devotion* * was my point ;
 And how I bless *night's* consecrating shades,
 Which to a *temple* turn an *universe* ;
 Fill us with great ideas, full of heav'n,
 And antidote the pestilential earth !
 In ev'ry storm, that either frowns, or falls,
 What an asylum has the soul in pray'r !
 And what a fane is *this*, in which to pray !
 And what a God must dwell in such a fane !
 O what a genius must inform the skies !
 And is *Lorenzo's* salamander-heart
 Cold, and untouch'd, amidst these sacred fires ?
 O ye nocturnal sparks ! ye glowing embers,
 On heav'n's broad hearth ! who burn, or burn no more,
 Who blaze, or die, as great *Jehovah's* breath,
 Or blows you, or forbears ; assist my song ;
 Pour your whole influence ; exorcize his heart,
 So long posselt ; and bring him back to *man*.

And is *Lorenzo* a demurrer still ?
Pride in thy parts provokes thee to contest
Truths, which, contested, put thy *parts* to shame.
 Nor shame they more *Lorenzo's* head, than heart ;
 A *faithless* heart, how despicably small !
 Too streight, aught great, or gen'rous, to receive !
 Fill'd with an atom ! fill'd, and foul'd, with *self* !
 And self-mistaken ! self, that lasts an hour !
Instincts, and *passions*, of the nobler kind,
 Lye suffocated there ; or *they* alone,
Reason apart, would wake high hope ; and open,
 To ravish'd thought, that *intellectual* sphere,
 Where *order*, *wisdom*, *goodness*, *providence*,
 Their endless miracles of love display,
 And promise all the truly great desire.

292 THE CONSOLATION.

The mind that would be *happy*, must be *great* ;
 Great, in its *wishes* ; great, in its *surveys*.
 Extended views a narrow mind extend ;
 Push out its corrugate, expansive make,
 Which, ere-long, *more* than planets shall embrace
 A man of *compass* makes a man of *worth* ;
 Divine contemplate, and become *divine*.

As man was made for glory, and for bliss,
 All littleness is in approach to woe ;
 Open thy bosom, set thy wishes wide,
 And let in *manhood* ; let in *happiness* ;
 Admit the boundless theatre of thought
 From nothing, up to God ; which makes a *man*.
 Take God from *nature*, nothing great is left ;
 Man's mind is in a pit, and nothing sees ;
 Man's heart is in a jakes, and loves the mire.
 Emerge from thy profound ; erect thine eye ;
 See thy distress ! how close art thou besieg'd !
 Besieg'd by *nature*, the proud sceptic's foe !
 Inclos'd by these innumerable worlds,
 Sparkling conviction on the darkest mind,
 As in a golden net of *Providence*,
 How art thou caught, sure captive of belief !
 From this thy blest captivity, what art,
 What blasphemy to reason, sets thee free !
 This scene is heav'n's indulgent violence :
 Canst thou bear up against this tide of glory ?
 What is earth bosom'd in these ambient orbs,
 But, faith in God impos'd, and press'd on man ?
 Dar'st thou still litigate thy desp'rate *cause*,
 Spite of these num'rous, awful, *witnesses*,
 And doubt the *deposition* of the skies ?
 O how laborious is thy way to ruin !
 Laborious ? 'tis *impracticable* quite ;

To sink beyond a *doubt*, in this debate,
With all his weight of wisdom, and of will,
And crime flagitious, I defy a fool.

Some wish they did ; but no man disbelieves.

God is a *Spirit* ; *Spirit* cannot strike
These gross, material organs ; God by man
As much is seen, as *man* a God can see,
In these astonishing exploits of power.

What order, beauty, motion, distance, size !

Confection of design, how exquisite !

How complicate, in their divine police !

Apt means ! great ends ! consent to gen'ral good !-----

Each attribute of these *material* gods,

So long (and that with specious pleas) ador'd,

A sep'rate conquest gains o'er rebel thought ;

And leads in triumph the whole mind of man.

Lorenzo ! this may seem harangue to thee ;

Such all is apt to seem, that thwarts our will.

And dost thou, then, demand a simple proof

Of this great master-moral of the skies,

Unskill'd, or dis-inclin'd, to read it *there* ?

Since 'tis the basis, and all drops without it,

Take it, in one compact, unbroken chain.

Such proof insists on an attentive ear ;

'Twill not make one amid a mob of thoughts,

And, for thy notice, struggle with the world.

Retire ;--the *world* shut out ;--thy thoughts call home ;--

Imagination's airy wing repress ;--

Lock up thy *senses* ;--let no *passion* stir ;

Wake all to *reason* ;--let *her* reign alone ;--

Then, in thy *soul's* deep silence, and the depth

Of *nature's* silence, midnight, thus inquire,

As *I* have done ; and shall inquire no more.

In nature's channel, thus the questions run.

294 THE CONSOLATION:

- " What am I ? and from whence ?---I nothing know
 " But that I *am* ; and, since I *am*, conclude
 " Something *eternal* : had there ere been *nought*,
 " *Nought* still had been : *eternal* there *must* be.——
 " But *what* *eternal* ?——why not *human* race ?
 " And *Adam's* ancestors without an end ?——
 " That's hard to be conceiv'd ; since ev'ry link
 " Of that long-chain'd succession is so frail ;
 " Can ev'ry *part* depend, and not the *whole* ?
 " Yet grant it true ; *new* difficulties rise ;
 " I'm still quite out at sea ; nor see the shore.
 " Whence *earth*, and these bright *orbs* ?---*eternal* too ?---
 " Grant *matter* was *eternal* ; still these *orbs*
 " Would want some other father ;---much design
 " Is seen in all their *motions*, all their *makes* ;
 " *Design* implies *intelligence*, and *art* :
 " That can't be from *themselves*---or *man* ; that *art*
 " Man scarce can comprehend, could man bestow ?
 " And nothing greater, yet allow'd, than *man*.---
 " Who, *motion*, foreign to the smallest grain,
 " Shot thro' vast masses of enormous weight ?
 " Who bid brute *matter's* restive lump assume
 " Such various forms, and gave it wings to fly ?
 " Has *matter* *innate* motion ? then each atom,
 " Asserting its indisputable right
 " To dance, would form an universe of dust :
 " Has *matter* *none* ? then whence these glorious forms,
 " And boundless flights, from *shapeless*, and *repos'd* ?
 " Has *matter* *more* than motion ? has it thought,
 " Judgment, and genius ? is it deeply learn'd
 " In *mathematics* ? has it fram'd *such* laws,
 " Which, but to *guess*, a *Newton* made immortal ?---
 " If so, how each *sage* atom laughs at me,
 " Who think a *god* inferior to a *man* !

- " If art, to form ; and counsel, to conduct ;
 " And that with greater far, than human skill,
 " Resides not in each block ;---a *Godhead* reigns.---
 " Grant, then, invisible, eternal, Mind ;
 " *That* granted, all is solv'd.---But, granting that,
 " Draw I not o'er me a still darker cloud ?
 " Grant I not that which I can ne'er conceive ?
 " A being without origin, or end !---
 " Hail, human liberty ! there is no God---
 " Yet, why ? on either scheme that knot subsists ;
 " Subsist it *must*, in God, or *human race* ;
 " If in the last, how many knots beside,
 " Indissoluble all ?---why chuse it *there*,
 " Where, chosen, still subsist ten thousand more ?
 " Reje't it, where, *that* chosen, all the rest
 " Dispers'd, leave *reason's* whole horizon clear ?
 " This is not reason's dictate ; *reason* says,
 " Close with the side where *one* grain turns the scale ;
 " What vast preponderance is here ! can reason
 " With louder voice exclaim---*believe a God* ?
 " And *reason* heard, is the sole mark of man.
 " What things impossible must man think true,
 " On any other system ! and how strange
 " To *disbelieve*, through mere credulity !"

If, in this chain, *Lorenzo* finds no flaw,
 Let it for ever bind him to *belief*.
 And where the link, in which a flaw he finds ?---
 And, if a God there is, that God how great !
 How great that *pow'r*, whose providential care
 Thro' these bright orbs dark centres darts a ray !
 Of *nature* universal threads the whole !
 And hangs *creation*, like a precious gem,
 Tho' little, on the footstool of his throne !

That little gem, how large ! a weight let fall

296 THE CONSOLATION:

From a fixt star, in ages can it reach
 This distant earth? say, then, *Lorenzo!* where,
 Where, ends this mighty building? where, begin
 The suburbs of creation? where, the wall
 Whose battlements look o'er into the vale
 Of non-existence? *Nothing's* strange abode!
 Say, at what point of space Jehovah dropp'd
 His slacken'd line, and laid his balance by;
 Weigh'd worlds, and measur'd infinite, no more?
 Where, rears his terminating pillar high
 Its extra-mundane head? and says, to gods,
 In characters illustrious as the sun,

*I stand, the plan's proud period; I pronounce
 The work accomplish'd; the creation clos'd:
 Shout, all ye gods; nor shout, ye gods alone;
 Of all that lives, or, if devoid of life,
 That rests, or rolls, ye heights, and depths, resound!
 Resound! resound! ye depths, and heights, resound!
 Hard are those questions?---answer harder still.*

Is *this* the sole exploit, the single birth,
 The solitary son, of pow'r divine?
 Or has th' Almighty Father, with a breath,
 Impregnated the womb of distant space?
 Has *He* not bid, in various provinces,
 Brother-creations the dark bowels burst
 Of night primaeval; barren, now, no more?
 And *He* the central sun, transpiercing all
 Those giant-generations, which disport,
 And dance, as notes, in his meridian ray;
 That ray withdrawn, benighted, or absorb'd,
 In that abyss of horror, whence they sprung;
 While *Chaos* triumphs, repossess of all
 Rival'd creation ravish from his throne?
Chaos! of nature both the womb, and grave!

Thinkst thou, my scheme, *Lorenzo*, spreads too wide?
 Is this *extravagant*?---no; this is *just*;
 Just, in *conjecture*, tho' 'twere false in *fact*.
 If 'tis an error, 'tis an error sprung
 From noble root, high thought of the Most-High.
 But wherefore error? who can prove it such?---
 He that can set *Omnipotence* a bound.
 Can man *conceive* beyond what God can *do*?
 Nothing, but *quite-impossible*, is hard.
 He summons into being, with like ease,
 A whole *creation*, and a single *grain*.
 Speaks he the word? a thousand worlds are born!--
 A thousand worlds? there's space for millions more;
 And in what space can his great *fat* fail!
 Condemn me not, cold critic! but indulge
 The warm *imagination*: why condemn?
 Why not indulge such thoughts, as swell our hearts
 With fuller admiration of *that power*,
 Who gives our hearts with such high thoughts to swell?
 Why not indulge in *his* augmented praise?
 Darts not *his* glory a still brighter ray,
 The less is left to *Ghaos*, and the realms
 Of hideous *night*, where *fancy* strays aghast;
 And, tho' most *talkative*, makes no report?
 Still seems my thought enormous; think again;
Experience 'self shall aid thy lame belief.
Glasses (that revelation to the sight!)
 Have they not led us deep in the disclosure
 Of fine-spun nature, exquisitely *small*;
 And, tho' *demonstrated*, still *ill-conceiv'd*?
 If, then, on the reverse, the mind would mount
 In *magnitude*, what mind can mount too far,
 To keep the balance, and creation *poise*?
 Defect alone can err on such a theme;

298 THE CONSOLATION:

What is too great, if we the *cause* survey?

Stupendous Architect! *thou, thou* art all!

My soul flies up and down in thoughts of *thee*,

And finds herself but at the centre still!

I am, thy name! *existence*, all *thine own*!

Creation's nothing; flatter'd much, if stil'd

"*The thin, the fleeting atmosphere of GOD.*"

O for the voice---of what? of whom?---what voice

Can answer to my wants, in *such* ascent,

As dares to deem one universe too small!

Tell me, *Lorenzo*! (for now *fancy* glows,

Fir'd in the vortex of Almighty power)

Is not this home-creation, in the map

Of universal *nature*, as a speck,

Like fair *Britannia* in our little ball;

Exceeding fair, and glorious, for its size,

But, elsewhere, far out-measur'd, far outshone?

In *fancy* (for the *fact* beyond us lyes)

Canst thou not figure it, an *isle*, almost

Too small for notice, in the *vast* of being;

Sever'd by mighty seas of *un-built* space,

From other *realms*; from ample *continents*

Of higher life, where nobler natives dwell;

Less *northern*, less remote from Deity,

Glowing beneath the *line* of the *Supreme*;

Where souls in excellence make haste, put forth

Luxuriant growths; nor the late autumn wait

Of *human* worth, but ripen soon to gods?

Yet why drown *fancy* in such depths as these?

Return, presumptuous rover! and confess

The bounds of man; nor blame them, as too small.

Enjoy we not full scope in what is *seen*?

Full ample the dominions of the sun!

Full glorious to behold! how far, how wide,

The matchless monarch, from his flaming throne,
 Lavish of lustre, throws his beams about him,
 Farther, and faster, than a thought can fly,
 And feeds his planets with eternal fires !
 This *Heliopolis*, by greater far,
 Than the proud tyrant of the *Nile*, was built ;
 And *He* alone, who built it, can destroy.
 Beyond *this city*, why strays human thought ?
 One wonderful, enough for man to range !
 One infinite, enough for man to read !
 One firmament, enough for man to read !
 O what voluminous instruction here !
 What page of wisdom is deny'd him ? none ;
 If learning his chief lesson makes him wise.
 Nor is *instruction*, here, our only gain ;
 There dwells a noble *Pathos* in the skies,
 Which warms our passions, proselytes our hearts.
 How eloquently shines the glowing pole !
 With what authority it gives its charge,
 Remonstrating great truths in style sublime,
 Tho' silent, loud ! heard earth around ; above
 The planets heard ; and not unheard in hell ;
Hell has her wonder, tho' too proud to praise.
 Is *earth*, then, more infernal ? has she those,
 Who neither *praise* (*Lorenzo* !) nor *admire* ?

Lorenzo's admiration, pre-engag'd,
 Ne'er ask'd the *moon* one question ; never held
 Least correspondence with a single star ;
 Ne'er rear'd an altar to the *queen of heav'n*
 Walking in brightness ; or her train ador'd.
 Their *sublunary* rivals have long since
 Engross'd his whole devotion ; *stars* malign,
 Which made their fond *astronomer* run mad ;
 Darken his *intellect*, corrupt his *heart* ;

300 THE CONSOLATION:

Cause him to sacrifice his fame and peace
 To momentary madness, call'd delight.
 Idolater, more gross than ever kiss'd
 The lifted hand to *Luna*, or pour'd out
 The blood to *Jove*!—O Thou, to whom belongs
 All sacrifice! O thou great *Jove* unfeign'd!
 Divine Instructor! thy first volume, *this*,
 For man's perusal; all in *Capitals*!
 In *moon*, and *stars* (heav'n's golden alphabet!)
 Emblaz'd to seize the sight; who *runs*, may *read*;
 Who *reads*, can *understand*. 'Tis unconfin'd
 To *Christian* land, or *Jewry*; fairly writ,
 In language universal, to *mankind*:
 A language, lofty to the learn'd; yet plain,
 To those that feed the flock, or guide the plough,
 Or, from its husks, strike out the bounding grain.
 A language worthy the great Mind, that speaks!
Preface, and *comment*, to the sacred page!
 Which oft refers its reader to the skies,
 As pre-supposing his first lesson *there*,
 And scripture-self a *fragment*, that unread.
 Stupendous book of wisdom, to the wise!
 Stupendous book! and open'd, *Night*! by thee.

By thee *much* open'd, I confess, O *night*!
 Yet *more* I wish; but *how* shall I prevail?
 Say, gentle *night*! whose modest, maiden beams
 Give us a *new* creation, and present
 The world's great picture, soften'd to the sight;
 Nay, kinder far, far more indulgent still,
 Say, thou, whose mild dominion's silver key
 Unlocks our hemisphere, and sets to view
 Worlds beyond number; worlds conceal'd by day
 Behind the proud, and envious star of noon!
 Canst thou not draw a deeper scene?—and shew

The mighty *Potentate*, to whom belong
 These rich *regalia* pompously display'd
 To kindle that high hope ? like him of *Uz*,
 I gaze around ; I search on ev'ry side——
 O for a glimpse of Him my soul adores !
 As the chas'd hart, amid the desert waste,
 Pants for the living stream ; for Him who made her,
 So pants the thirsty soul amid the blank
 Of sublunary joys. Say, goddess ! where ?
 Where, blazes *his* bright court ? where burns his throne ?
 Thou knowst ; for thou art near him ; by thee, round
His grand pavilion, sacred fame reports
 The sable curtains drawn. If not, can none
 Of thy fair daughter-train, so swift of wing,
 Who travel far, discover where *He* dwells ?
 A *star* his dwelling pointed out *below*.
 Ye *Pleiades* ! *Arcturus* ! *Mazeroth* !
 And thou, *Orion* ! of still keener eye !
 Say, ye, who guide the wilder'd in the waves,
 And bring them out of tempest into port !
 On which hand must I bend my course to find *him* ;
 These courtiers keep the secret of their King ;
 I wake whole nights, in vain, to steal it from them.

I wake ; and, waking, climb *night's* radiant scale,
 From sphere to sphere ; the steps by nature set
 For man's ascent ; at once to *tempt*, and *aid* ;
 To *tempt* his eye, and *aid* his tow'ring thought ;
 Till it arrives at the *great goal* of all.

In ardent *contemplation's* rapid car,
 From *earth*, as from my barrier, I set out.
 How swift I mount ! diminish'd *earth* recedes ;
 I pass the *moon* ; and, from her further side,
 Pierce heav'n's blue curtain ; strike into *remote* ;
 Where, with his lifted tube, the subtle sage

302 THE CONSOLATION:

His artificial, airy journey takes,
 And to *celestial* lengthens *human* sight.
 I pause at ev'ry *planet* on my road,
 And ask for Him, who gives their orbs to roll,
 Their foreheads fair to shine. From *Saturn's* ring,
 In which, of *earths* an army might be lost,
 With the bold *comet*, take my bolder flight,
 Amid those *few* reign glories of the skies,
 Of independent, native lustre, proud ;
 The souls of systems ! and the lords of life,
 Thro' their wide empires !——what behold I *now* ?
 A wilderness of wonders burning round ;
 Where *larger* suns inhabit *higher* spheres ;
 Perhaps the *villas* of descending gods !
 Nor halt I here ; my toil is but begun ;
 'Tis but the threshold of the Deity ;
 Or, far beneath it, I am groveling still.
 Nor is it strange ; I built on a mistake ;
 The grandeur of his works, whence *folly* sought
 For aid, to *reason* sets his glory higher ;
 Who built thus high for worms (mere worms to *Him* ;))
 O where, *Lorenzo* ! must the *Builder* dwell ?
 Pause, then ; and, for a moment, here respire---
 If human thought can keep its station here.
 Where am I ?---where is *earth* ?---nay, where art thou,
 O *sun* ?---is the sun turn'd recluse ?---and are
His boasted expeditions short to *mine* ?
 To *mine*, how short ! on nature's *Alps* I stand,
 And see a thousand firmaments beneath !
 A thousand systems ! as a thousand grains !
 So *much* a stranger, and so *late* arriv'd,
 How can man's curious spirit not inquire,
 What are the natives of this world sublime,
 Of this so foreign, un-terrestrial sphere,

Where mortal, *untranslated*, never stray'd ?

- “ O ye, as distant from my little home,
 “ As swiftest sun-beams in an age can fly !
 “ Far from my native element I roam,
 “ In quest of new, and wonderful, to man.
 “ What province this, of *His* immense domain,
 “ Whom all obeys ? or mortals here, or gods ?
 “ Ye bord'ers on the coasts of bliss ! what are you ?
 “ A colony from heav'n ? or, only rais'd,
 “ By frequent visit from heav'n's neighbouring realms,
 “ To secondary gods, and half-divine ?---
 “ Whate'er your nature, *this* is past dispute,
 “ Far other life you live, far other tongue
 “ You talk, far other thought, perhaps, you think,
 “ Than man. How various are the works of God !
 “ But say, *what* thought ? is *reason* here inthron'd,
 “ And absolute ? or *sense* in arms against her ?
 “ Have you *two* lights ? or need you no *reveal'd* ?
 “ Enjoy your happy realms their golden age ?
 “ And had your *Eden* an abstemious *Eve* ?
 “ Our *Eve's* fair daughters prove their pedigree,
 “ And ask their *Adams*——“ *Who would not be wife ?*
 “ Or, if your mother *fell*, are you *redeem'd* ?
 “ And if *redeem'd*——is your Redeemer *scorn'd* ?
 “ Is this your final residence ? if not,
 “ Change you your scene, *translated* ? or by *death* ?
 “ And if by *death* ; *what* death ?——know you *disease* ?
 “ Or horrid *war* ?---with war, this fatal hour,
 “ *Europa* groans (so call we a small field,
 “ Where kings run mad.) In our world, *death* deposes
 “ *Intemperance* to do the work of *age* ;
 “ And, hanging up the quiver *nature* gave him,
 “ As slow of execution, for dispatch
 “ Sends forth *imperial* butchers ; bids them slay

304 THE CONSOLATION:

- " Their sheep, (the silly sheep they fleec'd before)
 " And tofs him twice ten thousand at a meal,
 " Still all *your* executioners on thrones?
 " With *you*, can rage for plunder make a God?
 " And *bloodshed* wash out ev'ry other stain?---
 " But you, perhaps, can't bleed: from matter gross
 " Your *spirits* clean, are delicately clad
 " In fine-spun aether; privileg'd to soar,
 " Unloaded, uninfected; how unlike
 " The lot of man! how few of human race
 " By their own *mud* unmurder'd! how we wage
 " Self-war eternal!--is your painful day
 " Of hardy conflict o'er? or, are you still
 " Raw candidates at school? and have you those
 " Who disaffect *reversions*, as with *us*?
 " But what are *we*? you never heard of *man*,
 " Or *earth*; the *bedlam* of the universe!
 " Where *reason* (un-diseas'd with you) runs mad,
 " And nurses *folly's* children as *her own*;
 " Fond of the foulest. In the sacred mount
 " Of *holiness*, where reason is pronounc'd
 " *Infallible*; and *thunders*, like a god;
 " Ev'n *there*, by *saints*, the *demons* are outdone;
 " What *these* think wrong, our *saints* refine to right;
 " And kindly teach *dull* hell her own black arts;
 " *Satan*, instructed, o'er their *morals* smiles.---
 " But *this*, how strange to you, who know not *man*!
 " Has the least rumour of our race arriv'd?
 " Call'd *here* *Elijah*, in his flaming car?
 " Past by you the good *Enoch*, on his road
 " To those fair fields, whence *Lucifer* was hurl'd;
 " Who brush'd, perhaps, your sphere, in his descent,
 " Stain'd your pure crystal aether, or let fall
 " A short eclipse from his portentous shade?

“ O ! that the fiend had lodg’d on some broad orb
 “ Athwart his way ; nor reach’d his present home,
 “ Then blacken’d *earth* with footsteps foul’d in hell,
 “ Nor wash’d in *ocean*, as from *Rome* he past
 “ To *Britain’s* isle ; *too, too*, conspicuous *there* !”

But this is all digression : where is *He*,
 That o’er heav’n’s battlements the felon hurl’d
 To groans, and chains, and darkness ? where is *He*,
 Who sees creation’s summit in a vale ?
He, whom, while man is *man*, he can’t but seek ;
 And if he finds, commences *more* than man ?
 O for a telescope his throne to reach !
 Tell me, ye learn’d on *earth* ! or blest *above* !
 Ye searching, ye *Newtonian* angels ! tell,
 Where, your great *Master’s* orb ? his planets, where ?
 Those *conscious* satellites, those *morning-stars*,
 First-born of Deity ! from central love,
 By veneration most profound, thrown off ;
 By sweet attraction, no less strongly drawn ;
Aw’d, and yet *raptur’d* ; *raptur’d*, yet *serene* ;
 Past thought, illustrious, but with borrow’d beams ;
 In still *approaching* circles, still *remote*,
 Revolving round the sun’s eternal *Sire* ?
 Or sent, in lines direct, on embassies
 To nations—in what latitude ?—beyond
 Terrestrial thought’s horizon !—and on what
 High errands sent ?—here *human* effort ends ;
 And leaves me still a stranger to *his* throne.

Full well it might ! I quite mistook my road,
 Born in an age more curious, than devout ;
 More fond to fix the *place* of heav’n, or hell,
 Than studious *this* to shun, or *that* secure.
 ’Tis not the *curious*, but the *pious* path,
 That leads me to my point : *Lorenzo* ! know,

306 THE CONSOLATION:

Without or *star*, or *angel*, for their guide,
Who worship God, shall *find* him. *Humble love*,
And not proud *reason*, keeps the door of heav'n;
Love finds admission, where proud *science* fails.

Man's science is the culture of his heart;
And not to lose his plummet in the depths
Of *nature* or the more profound of God.

Either to know, is an attempt that sets
The wisest on a level with the fool.

To fathom *nature* (ill-attempted *here*!)

Past doubt, is deep philosophy *above*;

Higher degrees in bliss archangels take,

As deeper learn'd; the deepest, learning still.

For, what a *thunder* of Omnipotence

(So might I dare to speak) is *seen* in all!

In *man*! in *earth*! in more amazing *skies*!

Teaching this lesson, *pride* is loth to learn---

"Not deeply to *discern*, not much to *know*,

"Mankind was born to *wonder* and *adore*."

And is there cause for higher *wonder* still,

Than that which struck us from our past surveys?

Yes; and for deeper *adoration* too.

From my late airy travel unconfin'd,

Have I learn'd nothing?---Yes, *Lorenzo*! this;

Each of these stars is a religious house;

I saw their altars smoke, their incense rise,

And heard *Hosannas* ring through ev'ry sphere,

A seminary fraught with future gods.

Nature, all o'er is *consecrated* ground,

Teeming with growths immortal, and divine.

The great *Proprietors* all-bounteous hand

Leaves nothing waste; but sows these fiery fields

With seeds of *reason*, which to *virtues* rise

Beneath his genial ray; and, if escap'd

The pestilential blasts of stubborn *will*,
When grown mature, are gather'd for the skies.
And is *devotion* thought too much on *earth*,
When beings, so superior, homage *boast*,
And *triumph* in prostrations to the *throne*?

But wherefore more of planets, or of stars?
Ethereal journeys, and, discover'd there,
Ten thousand worlds, ten thousand ways *devout*?
All *nature* sending incense to the *throne*,
Except the bold *Lorenzo's* of our sphere?
Op'ning the solemn sources of my soul,
Since I have pour'd, like feign'd *Eridanus*,
My flowing numbers o'er the flaming skies,
Nor see, of *fancy*, or of *fact*, what more,
Invites the muse——here turn we, and review
Our past nocturnal landscape wide:——then, *say*,
Say, then, *Lorenzo*! with what burst of heart,
The whole, at once, revolving in his thought,
Must man exclaim, adoring, and aghast?

“ O what a root! O what a branch is here!

“ O what a father! what a family!

“ Worlds! systems! and creations!——and creations,

“ In one agglomerated cluster, hung,

“ * Great *Vine*, on thee, on thee the cluster hangs;

“ The filial cluster! infinitely spread

“ In glowing globes, with various being fraught;

“ And drinks (nectareous draught!) immortal life.

“ Or, shall I say (for *who* can say enough?)

“ A constellation of ten thousand gems,

“ (And, O! of what dimension! of what weight!)

“ Set in one *signet*, flames on the right-hand

“ Of *Majesty divine*! the *blazing seal*,

“ That deeply stamps, on all created *mind*,

308 THE CONSOLATION:

" Indelible, *His* sov'reign attributes,
 " *Omnipotence*, and *Love!* that, passing bound;
 " And *this*, surpassing that. Nor stop we here,
 " For want of pow'r in God, but *thought* in man.
 " Even *this* acknowledg'd, leaves us still in debt;
 " If greater aught, that greater all is *thine*.
 " *Dread fire!*----accept this *miniature* of thee;
 " And pardon an *attempt* from mortal thought,
 " In which archangels might have fail'd, unblam'd."

How such ideas of th' *Almighty's pow'r*,
 And such ideas of th' *Almighty's plan*,
 (Ideas not absurd) distend the thought
 Of feeble mortals! nor of *them* alone!
 The fulness of the Deity breaks forth
 In *inconceivables* to men, and gods.
 Think, then, O think; nor ever drop the thought;
 How low must *man* descend, when *gods* adore! —
 Have I not, then, accomplish'd my proud boast?
 Did I not tell thee, " * We would mount, *Lorenzo!*
 " And kindle our devotion at the *stars?*"

And have I *fail'd?* and did I *flatter* thee?
 And art all adamant? and dost confute
 All urg'd, with one irrefragable *smile?*
Lorenzo! mirth, how miserable here!
 Swear by the *stars*, by *him* who made them, swear,
 Thy heart, henceforth, shall be pure as *they*:
 Then *thou*, like *them*, shalt *shine*; like *them*, shalt *rise* —
 From low to lofty; from obscure to bright;
 By due gradation, *nature's* sacred law.
 The *stars*, from whence?---ask *Chaos*---he can tell.
 These bright temptations to idolatry,
 From *darkness*, and *confusion*, took their birth:
 Sons of *deformity!* from-fluid dregs

Tartarean, first they rose to masses rude ;
 And then, to spheres opaque ; then dimly shone ;
 Then brighten'd ; then blaz'd out in *perfect day*.
Nature delights in progress ; in advance
 From worse to better : but, when *minds* ascend,
 Progress, in part, depends upon *themselves*.
 Heav'n aids exertion ; greater makes the great ;
 The *voluntary* little lessens more.
 O be a *man* ! and thou shalt be a *god* !
 And *half self-made* --- ambition how divine !

O thou, ambitious of disgrace alone !
 Still undevout ? unkindled ? --- tho' high-taught,
 School'd by the skies ; and pupil of the stars ;
 Rank coward to the *fashionable world* !
 Art thou *asham'd* to bend thy knee to Heav'n ?
 Curst fume of pride, exhal'd from deepest hell !
 Pride in *religion* is man's highest praise.
 Bent on destruction ! and in love with death !
 Not all these luminaries, quench'd at once,
 Were half so sad, as one benighted mind,
 Which gropes for happiness, and meets *despair*.
 How, like a widow in her weeds, the *night*,
 Amid her glimm'ring tapers, silent sits !
 How sorrowful, how desolate, she weeps
 Perpetual dews, and saddens nature's scene !
 A scene more sad *sin* makes the darken'd soul ;
 All comfort kills, nor leaves one spark alive.

Tho' blind of heart, still open is thine eye :
 Why such magnificence in all thou seest ?
 Of *matter's* grandeur, know, one end is this,
 To tell the *rational*, who gazes on it ---
 " Tho' *that* immensely great, still greater *He*,
 " Whose breast, capacious, can embrace, and lodge,
 " Unburden'd, nature's universal scheme ;

310 THE CONSOLATION:

" Can grasp *creation* with a *single* thought ;
 " *Creation* grasp ; and not exclude its *Sire* " ---
 To tell him farther --- " It behoves him much
 " To guard th' important, yet depending, fate
 " Of being, brighter than a thousand suns ;
 " One single ray of *thought* outshines them all.
 And if man hears obedient, soon he'll soar
 Superior heights, and on his purple wing,
 His purple wing bedrop'd with eyes of gold,
 Rising, where *thought* is *now* deny'd to rise,
 Look down *triumphant* on these dazzling spheres.

Why then persist ? --- no mortal ever liv'd
 But, *dying*, he pronounc'd (when words are true !)
 The whole that charms thee, absolutely vain ;
 Vain, and far worse ! --- think thou, with dying men ;
 O *condescend* to think as angels think !
 O *tolerate* a chance for happiness !
 Our nature such, ill choice ensures ill fate ;
 And hell had been, tho' there had been no God.
 Dost thou not know, my new astronomer !
Earth, turning from the *sun*, brings night to man ;
Man, turning from his God, brings *endless* night :
 Where thou canst read no *morals*, find no *friend*,
 Amend no *manners*, and expect no *peace*.
 How *deep* the darkness ! and the groan, how *loud* !
 And far, how far, from *lambent* are the flames !
 Such is *Lorenzo's* purchase ! such his praise !
 The proud, the politic, *Lorenzo's* praise !
 Tho' in his ear, and level'd at his heart,
 I've half read o'er the volume of the skies.

For think not thou hast heard all this from *me* ;
 My song but echoes what great *nature* speaks :
 What has she spoken ? thus the goddess spoke,
 Thus speaks for ever ; --- " Place, at nature's head,

" A Sov'reign, which o'er all things rolls his eye;
 " Extends his wing, promulgates his commands;
 " But above all, diffuses endless good;
 " To whom, for sure redress, the wrong'd may fly;
 " The vile, for mercy; and the pain'd, for peace;
 " By whom, the various tenants of these spheres,
 " Diversify'd in fortunes, place, and powers,
 " Rais'd in enjoyment, as in worth they rise,
 " Arrive at length (if worthy such approach)
 " At that blest fountain-head, from whence they stream;
 " Where conflict past redoubles present joy;
 " And present joy looks forward on increase;
 " And that, on more; no period! ev'ry step
 " A double boon! a *promise*, and a *bliss*."
 How easy sits *this* scheme on human hearts!
 It suits their make; it sooths their vast desires;
Passion is pleas'd; and *reason* asks no more;
 'Tis rational! 'tis great! — but what is *thine*?
 It darkens! shocks! excruciates! and confounds!
 Leaves us quite naked, both of help, and hope,
 Sinking from bad to worse; few years, the sport
 Of fortune; then, the morsel of despair.

Say, then, *Lorenzo*! (for thou know'st it well)
 What's *vice*? — mere want of compass in our thought.
Religion, what? — the proof of *common-sense*;
 How art thou whooted, where the *least* prevails!
 Is it *my* fault, if *these truths* call thee fool?
 And thou shalt never be *miscall'd* by me.
 Can neither *shame*, nor *terror*, stand thy friend?
 And art thou *still* an insect in the mire?
 How, like thy guardian angel, have I flown;
 Snatch'd thee from earth; escorted thee thro' all
 Th' ethereal armies; walkt thee, like a god,
 Thro' splendors of first magnitude, arrang'd

312 THE CONSOLATION.

On either hand ; clouds thrown beneath thy feet ;
 Close-cruis'd on the bright paradise of God ;
 And almost introduc'd thee to *the throne* !
 And art thou still carousing, for delight,
 Rank poison ; first, fermenting to mere froth,
 And then subsiding into final gall ?
 To beings of sublime, *immortal* make,
 How shocking is all joy, whose end is sure !
 Such joy more shocking still, the more it charms !
 And dost thou chuse what ends, ere well-begun ?
 And infamous, as short ? and dost thou chuse
 (*Thou*, to whose palate *glory* is so sweet)
 To wade into *perdition*, thro' *contempt*,
 Not of poor bigots only, but thy own ?
 For I have peep'd into thy cover'd heart,
 And seen it blush beneath a boastful brow ;
 For, by strong guilt's most violent assault,
 Conscience is but *disabled*, not *destroy'd*.

O thou most awful being, and most vain !
 Thy will, how *frail* ! how *glorious* is thy power !
 Tho' dread *Eternity* has sown her seeds
 Of bliss, and woe, in thy despotic breast ;
 Tho' heav'n, and hell, depend upon thy choice ;
 A butterfly comes 'cross, and both are fled.
 Is this the picture of a rational ?
 This horrid image, shall it be most just ?
Lorenzo ! no : it cannot,---*shall* not be,
 If there is force in *reason* ; or, in *sounds*
 Chanted beneath the glimpses of the moon,
 A magic, at this planetary hour,
 When *slumber* locks the gen'ral lip, and dreams
 Thro' senseless mazes hunt souls *un-inspir'd*.
 Attend---the sacred mysteries begin---
 My solemn *night-born* adjuration hear ;

Hear, and I'll raise thy spirit from the dust ;
While the *stars* gaze on this enchantment *new* ;
Inchantment, not infernal, but divine !

- " By *silence*, *Death's* peculiar attribute ;
- " By *darkness*, *Guilt's* inevitable doom ;
- " By *darkness*, and by *silence*, sisters dread !
- " That draw the curtain round *Night's* ebon throne,
- " And raise ideas, solemn as the scene ;
- " By Night, and all of awful, night presents
- " To *thought*, or *sense* (of awful much, to both,
- " The goddess brings) ! By these her trembling *fires*,
- " Like *Vesta's*, ever-burning ! and, like *hers*,
- " Sacred to thoughts immaculate, and pure !
- " By these bright orators, that *prove*, and *praise*,
- " And press thee to revere, the Deity,
- " Perhaps, too, aid thee, when rever'd awhile,
- " To reach *His* throne ; as *stages* of the soul,
- " Thro' which, at diff'rent periods, she shall pass,
- " Refining gradual, for her final height,
- " And purging off some dross at ev'ry sphere !
- " By this dark pall thrown o'er the silent world !
- " By the world's kings, and kingdoms, most renown'd,
- " From short ambition's *zenith* set for ever ;
- " Sad presage to vain boasters, now in bloom !
- " By the long list of swift mortality,
- " From *Adam* downward to this ev'ning's knell,
- " Which midnight waves in *fancy's* startled eye ;
- " And shocks her with a hundred centuries
- " Round *death's* black banner throng'd, in human
- " thought !
- " By thousands, *now*, resigning their last breath,
- " And calling thee——wert thou so wise to hear !
- " By tombs o'er tombs arising ; human earth
- " Ejected, to make room for——human earth ;

312 THE CONSOLATION

On either hand ; clouds thrown beneath thy feet ;
 Close-cruis'd on the bright paradise of God ;
 And almost introduc'd thee to *the throne* !
 And art thou still carousing, for delight,
 Rank poison ; first, fermenting to mere *froth*,
 And then subsiding into final *gall* ?
 To beings of sublime, *immortal* make,
 How shocking is all joy, whose *end* is sure !
 Such joy *more* shocking still, the *more* it *charms* !
 And dost thou chuse what ends, ere well-begun ?
 And infamous, as short ? and dost thou chuse
 (*Thou*, to whose palate *glory* is so sweet)
 To wade into *perdition*, thro' *contempt*,
 Not of poor bigots only, but thy *own* ?
 For I have peep'd into thy cover'd heart,
 And seen it blush beneath a boastful brow ;
 For, by strong guilt's most violent assault,
 Conscience is but *disabled*, not *destroy'd*.

O thou most awful being, and most vain !
 Thy will, how *frail* ! how *glorious* is thy power !
 Tho' dread *Eternity* has sown her seeds
 Of bliss, and woe, in thy despotic breast ;
 Tho' heav'n, and hell, depend upon thy choice ;
 A butterfly comes 'cross, and both are fled.
 Is this the picture of a rational ?
 This horrid image, shall it be most just ?
Lorenzo ! no : it cannot, --- *shall* not be,
 If there is force in *reason* ; or, in *sounds*
 Chanted beneath the glimpses of the moon,
 A magic, at this planetary hour,
 When *slumber* locks the gen'ral lip, and dreams
 Thro' senseless mazes hunt souls *un-inspir'd*.
 Attend --- the sacred mysteries begin ---
 My solemn *night-born* adjuration hear ;

Hear, and I'll raise thy spirit from the dust ;
While the *stars* gaze on this enchantment *new* ;
Inchantment, not infernal, but divine !

- " By *silence*, *Death's* peculiar attribute ;
- " By *darkness*, *Guilt's* inevitable doom ;
- " By *darkness*, and by *silence*, sisters dread !
- " That draw the curtain round *Night's* ebon throne,
- " And raise ideas, solemn as the scene ;
- " By *Night*, and all of awful, night presents
- " To *thought*, or *sense* (of awful much, to both,
- " The goddess brings) ! By these her trembling *fires*,
- " Like *Vesta's*, ever-burning ! and, like *hers*,
- " Sacred to thoughts immaculate, and pure !
- " By these bright orators, that *prove*, and *praise*,
- " And press thee to revere, the Deity,
- " Perhaps, too, aid thee, when rever'd awhile,
- " To reach *His* throne ; as *stages* of the soul,
- " Thro' which, at diff'rent periods, she shall pass,
- " Refining gradual, for her final height,
- " And purging off some dross at ev'ry sphere !
- " By this dark pall thrown o'er the silent world !
- " By the world's kings, and kingdoms, most renown'd,
- " From short ambition's *zenith* set for ever ;
- " Sad preface to vain boasters, now in bloom !
- " By the long list of swift mortality,
- " From *Adam* downward to this ev'ning's knell,
- " Which midnight waves in *fancy's* startled eye ;
- " And shocks her with a hundred centuries
- " Round *death's* black banner throng'd, in human
- " thought !
- " By thousands, *now*, resigning their last breath,
- " And calling thee——wert thou so wise to hear !
- " By tombs o'er tombs arising ; human earth
- " Ejected, to make room for——human earth ;

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" The monarch's *terror* ! and the sexton's *trade* !
 " By pompous obsequies, that shun the day,
 " The *torch* funereal, and the nodding *plume*,
 " Which makes poor man's humiliation proud ;
 " Boast of our *ruin* ! triumph of our *dust* !
 " By the damp vault that weeps o'er royal bones ;
 " And the pale lamp, that shews the ghastly dead,
 " *More* ghastly thro' the thick-incumbent gloom !
 " By visits (if there are) from darker scenes,
 " The gliding spectre ! and the groaning grove !
 " By groans, and graves, and miseries that groan
 " For the grave's shelter ! By desponding men,
 " Senseless to pains of death, from pangs of guilt !
 " By guilt's last audit ! By yon *moon* in blood,
 " The rocking firmament, the falling stars,
 " And thunder's last discharge, great nature's knell !
 " By *second Chaos* ; and *eternal night* "——
Be wise---nor let *Philander* blame my *charm* ;
 But own not ill-discharg'd my double debt,
Love to the living ; *duty* to the dead.

For know, I'm but executor ; *He* left
 This moral legacy ; *I* make it o'er
 By *his* command ; *Philander* hear in me ;
 And heav'n in both.---If deaf to these, Oh ! hear
Florello's tender voice ; *his* weal depends
 On *thy* resolve ; it trembles at thy choice ;
 For *his* sake——love *thyself* : example strikes
 All human hearts ; a *bad* example more ;
 More still, a father's ! that ensures his ruin.
 As parent of his being, wouldst thou prove
 Th' unnatural parent of his miseries,
 And make him curse the being which thou gav'st ?
 Is *this* the blessing of so fond a father ?
 If careless of *Lorenzo* ! spare, Oh ! spare,

Florello's father, and *Philander's* friend ;
Florello's father ruin'd, ruins him ;
 And from *Philander's* friend the world expects
 A conduct, no dishonour to the dead.
 Let *passion* do, what *nobler motive* should ;
 Let *love*, and *emulation*, rise in aid
 To *reason* ; and persuade thee to be---blest.

This seems not a request to be deny'd ;
 Yet (such th' infatuation of mankind !)
 'Tis the most *hopeless*, man can make to man.
 Shall I, then, rise in argument, and warmth ;
 And urge *Philander's* posthumous advice,
 From topics yet unbroach'd ?---
 But Oh ! I faint ! my spirits fail !---nor strange ;
 So long on wing, and in no middle clime ;
 To which my great *Creator's* glory call'd :
 And calls---but, now, in vain. *Sleep's* dewy wand
 Has strok'd my drooping lids, and *promises*
 My long arrear of rest ; the *downy god*
 (Wont to return with our returning *peace*)
 Will *pay*, ere-long, and bless me with repose.
 Haste, haste, sweet stranger ! from the peasant's cot,
 The ship-boy's hammock, or the soldier's straw,
 Whence *sorrow* never chas'd thee ; with thee bring,
 Not hideous visions, as of late ; but draughts
 Delicious of well-tasted, cordial, rest ;
 Man's rich restorative ; his balmy bath,
 That supples, lubricates, and keeps in play,
 The various movements of this nice machine,
 Which asks such frequent periods of repair.
 When tir'd with vain rotations of the day ;
Sleep winds us up for the succeeding dawn ;
 Fresh we spin on, till *sickness* clogs our wheels,
 Or *death* quite breaks the spring, and motion ends.

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When will it end with me?

——“Thou only know’st,

- “*Thou*, whose broad eye the *future*, and the *past*,
- “Joins to the *present*; making one of *three*
- “To mortal thought? *thou* know’st, and *thou* alone,
- “All-knowing!---all unknown!---and yet well-known!
- “Near, tho’ remote! and, tho’ unfathom’d, felt!
- “And, tho’ invifible, for ever feen!
- “And feen in all! the *great*, and the *minute*:
- “Each globe above, with its gigantic race,
- “Each flow’r, each leaf, with its fmall people fwarm’d,
- “*(Thofe puny vouchers for Omnipotence!)*
- “To the firft thought, that asks, “*From whence?*”
- “declare
- “Their common fource. *Thou* fountain running o’er
- “In rivers of communicated joy!
- “Who gav’st us fpeech for far, far humbler themes!
- “Say, by what name fhall I prefume to call
- “*Him* I fee burning in thefe countlefs funs,
- “As *Mofes*, in the *bush*? *illuftrious mind*!
- “The whole creation, lefs, far lefs, to thee,
- “Than *that*, to the creation’s ample round.
- “How fhall I name *thee*?---how my labouring foul
- “Heaves underneath the thought, too big for birth!
- “Great fyftem of perfections! mighty caufe
- “Of caufes mighty! caufe uncaus’d! fole root
- “Of *nature*, that luxuriant growth of God!
- “Firft father of *effects*! that progeny
- “Of endlefs feries; where the golden chain’s
- “Laft link admits a period, who can tell?
- “Father of all that is or heard, or hears!
- “Father of all that is or feen, or fees!
- “Father of all that *is*, or *fhall* arife!
- “Father of this immeafurable mafs

- " Of *matter* multiform ; or dense, or rare ;
- " Opaque, or lucid ; rapid, or at rest ;
- " Minute, or passing bound ! in each extreme
- " Of like amaze, and mystery, to man.
- " Father of these bright millions of the *night* !
- " Of which the least full Godhead had proclaim'd,
- " And thrown the gazer on his knee---or, say,
- " Is appellation higher still, thy choice ?
- " Father of *matter*'s temporary lords !
- " Father of *spirits* ! nobler offspring ! sparks.
- " Of high paternal glory ; rich-endow'd
- " With various measures, and with various modes
- " Of *instinct*, *reason*, *intuition* ; beams
- " More pale, or bright from *day divine*, to break
- " The dark of *matter* *organiz'd* (the ware
- " Of all *created* spirit) ; beams, that rise
- " Each over other in superior light,
- " Till the last ripens into lustre strong,
- " Of next approach to *Godhead*. Father fond
- " (Far fonder than e'er bore that name on earth)
- " Of *intellectual* beings ! beings blest
- " With pow'rs to please *thee* ; not of passive ply
- " To laws they know not ; beings lodg'd in seats
- " Of well-adapted joys ; in different domes
- " Of this imperial palace for thy sons ;
- " Of this proud, populous, well-policy'd,
- " Tho' boundless habitation, plann'd by *thee* ;
- " Whose several clans their several climates suit ;
- " And transposition, doubtless, would destroy.
- " Or, Oh ! indulge, immortal *King* ! indulge
- " A title, less august, but more
- " Endearing ; ah ! how sweet in human ears !
- " Sweet in our ears ! and triumph in our hearts !
- " *Father of immortality to man* !

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- " A theme that * lately set my soul on fire.—
 " And *Thou* the *next* ! yet equal ! *thou*, by whom
 " That blessing was convey'd ; far more ! was *bought* ;
 " Ineffable the price ! by whom all worlds
 " Were made ; and one, redeem'd ! illustrious light
 " From light illustrious ! *thou*, whose *regal* power,
 " Finite in *time*, but infinite in *space*,
 " On more than adamantine basis fix'd,
 " O'er more, far more, than diadems, and thrones,
 " Inviolably reigns ; the *dread* of gods !
 " And, Oh ! the *friend* of man ! beneath whose foot,
 " And by the mandate of whose awful nod,
 " All religions, revolutions, fortunes, fates,
 " Of high, of low, of mind, and matter, roll
 " Thro' the short channels of expiring *time*,
 " Or shoreless ocean of eternity,
 " Calm, or tempestuous (as *thy* Spirit breathes)
 " In absolute subjection !---and, O *thou*
 " The glorious *Third* ! distinct, not separate !
 " Beaming from *Both* ! with both incorporate !
 " And (strange to tell !) incorporate with dust !
 " By condescension, as thy glory, great,
 " Enshrin'd in man ! of human hearts, if pure,
 " Divine inhabitant ! the tie divine
 " Of heav'n with distant earth ! by whom, I trust,
 " (If not inspir'd) uncensur'd this address
 " To *thee*, to *them*---to whom ?---mysterious power !
 " Reveal'd---yet unreveal'd ! darkness in light !
 " Number in unity ! our joy ! our dread !
 " The *triple* bolt that lays all wrong in ruin !
 " That animates all right, the *triple* sun !
 " Sun of the soul ! her never-setting sun !
 " Triune, unutterable, unconceiv'd,

Night the sixth, and seventh:

- " Absconding, yet demonstrable, *Great God* !
- " Greater than greatest ! better than the best !
- " Kinder than kindest ! with soft *pity's* eye,
- " Or (stronger still to speak it) with *thine own*,
- " From thy bright home, from that high firmament,
- " Where *thou*, from all eternity hast dwelt ;
- " Beyond archangels *unassisted* ken ;
- " From far above what mortals highest call ;
- " From elevation's pinnacle : look down,
- " Through——what ? confounding interval ! thro' all,
- " And more, than lab'ring *fancy* can conceive ;
- " Thro' radiant ranks of essences unknown ;
- " Thro' hierarchies from hierarchies detach'd
- " Round various banners of *Omnipotence*,
- " With endless change of rapt'rous duties fir'd ;
- " Thro' wond'rous beings interposing swarms,
- " All clust'ring at the call, to dwell in *thee* ;
- " Thro' this wide waste of worlds ; this *visto* vast,
- " All fanded o'er with suns ; suns turn'd to *night*
- " Before *thy* feeblest beam--look down--down--down,
- " On a poor *breathing particle* in dust ;
- " Or, lower.--an *immortal* in his crimes,
- " His crimes forgive ! forgive his virtues, too !
- " Those smaller faults ; half-converts to the right.
- " Nor let me close these eyes, which never more
- " May see the sun, (tho' night's descending scale
- " Now weighs up morn) unpity'd, and unblest !
- " In *thy* displeasure dwells *eternal* pain ;
- " Pain, our aversion ; pain, which strikes me *now* ;
- " And, since all pain is terrible to man,
- " Tho' transient, terrible ; at *thy* good hour,
- " Gently, ah gently, lay me in my bed,
- " My *clay-cold bed* ! by nature, now, so near ;
- " By nature, near ; still nearer by disease !

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- " Till then, be *this*, an emblem of my grave :
 " Let it out-preach the preacher ; ev'ry night
 " Let it outcry the boy at *Philip's* ear ;
 " That tongue of death ! that herald of the tomb !
 " And when (the shelter of thy wing implor'd)
 " My *senses*, sooth'd, shall sink in soft repose ;
 " O sink *this* truth still deeper in my soul,
 " Suggested by my pillow, sign'd by *fate*,
 " First, in *fate's* volume, at the page of *man*.---
 " *Man's* sickly soul, tho' turn'd and toss'd for ever,
 " From side to side, can rest on nought but thee ;
 " Here, in full trust : hereafter in full joy.
 " On *thee*, the promis'd, sure, eternal down
 " Of spirits toil'd in travel thro' this vale.
 " Nor of *that* pillow shall my soul despond ;
 " For--love Almighty ! love Almighty (sing,
 " Exult, creation !) love Almighty reigns !
 " That death of *death* ! that cordial of *despair* !
 " And loud *Eternity's* triumphant song !
 " Of whom, no more :--for, O thou *Patron-God* ?
 " Thou *god*, and *mortal* ! thence *more God* to man !
 " Man's theme eternal ! man's eternal theme !
 " Thou canst not 'scape *uninjur'd* from our *praise*.
 " Uninjur'd from our praise can *He* escape,
 " Who, disembofom'd from the *Father*, bows
 " The heav'n of heav'ns, to kiss the distant earth !
 " Breathes out in agonies a sinless soul !
 " Against the *cross*, *death's* iron sceptre breaks !
 " From famish'd *ruin* plucks her human prey !
 " Throws wide the gates celestial to his *foes* !
 " Their *gratitude*, for such a boundless debt,
 " Deputes their *suff'ring brothers* to receive !
 " And, if deep human guilt in payment fails ;
 " As deeper guilt, prohibits our *despair* !

- “ Enjoins it, as our duty, to *rejoice* !
 “ And, (to close all) omnipotently kind,
 “ * *Takes his delights among the sons of men.*”

What words are these ! — and did they come from
 And were they spoke to man ! to guilty man ! (heav’n !
 What are all mysteries to love like this !
 The song of angels, all the melodies
 Of choral gods, are waisted in the sound ;
 Heal and exhilarate the broken heart,
 Tho’ plung’d, before, in horrors dark as *night* :
 Rich prelibation of *consummate* joy !
 Nor wait we dissolution to be blest.

This final effort of the moral muse,
 How justly † *titled* ! nor for me alone ;
 For all that read ; what spirit of support,
 What heights of *Consolation* crown my song ?

Then, farewell *night* ! of darkness, now, no more :
 Joy breaks, shines, triumphs ; ’tis eternal day.
 Shall that which rises out of *nought* complain
 Of a few evils, paid with endless joys ?
 My soul ! henceforth, in sweetest union join
 The two supports of human happiness,
 Which some, erroneous, think can never meet ;
 True *taste of life*, and constant *thought of death* ;
 The *thought of death*, sole victor of its *dread* !
Hope be thy joy ; and *probity* thy skill ;
 Thy *patron*, *He*, whose diadem has dropp’d
 Yon gems of heav’n ; *Eternity*, thy prize :
 And leave the racers of the *world* their own,
 Their feather, and their froth, for endless toils :
 They part with all for that *which is not bread* ;
 They mortify, they starve, on wealth, fame, power ;
 And laugh to scorn the *fools* that aim at more.

* *Prev. chap. viii.*

† *The Consolation.*

322 THE CONSOLATION:

How must a spirit, late escap'd from earth,
 Suppose *Philander's*, *Lucia's* or *Narcissa's*,
 The *truth of things* new-blazing in its eye,
 Look back, astonish'd, on the ways of men,
 Whose lives whole drift is to forget their graves !
 And when our *present privilege* is past,
 To scourge us with due sense of its *abuse*,
 The *same* astonishment will seize us all.
 What *then* must pain us, would preserve us *now*.
Lorenzo ! 'tis not yet too late : *Lorenzo* !
 Seize wisdom, ere 'tis torment to be wise ;
 That is, seize *wisdom*, ere she seizes *thee*.
 For, what, my small philosopher ! is *hell* ?
 'Tis nothing, but full knowledge of *the truth*,
 When *truth*, resisted long, is sworn our foe ;
 And calls *eternity* to do her right.

Thus, *darkness* aiding intellectual light,
 And sacred *silence* whisp'ring truths divine,
 And *truths divine* converting pain to peace,
 My song the midnight raven has outwing'd,
 And shot, ambitious of unbounded scenes,
 Beyond the flaming limits of the world,
 Her gloomy flight. But what avails the flight
 Of *fancy*, when our *hearts* remain below ?
Virtue abounds in flatterers, and foes ;
 'Tis pride to praise her ; penance, to perform.
 To more than words, to more than worth of tongue,
Lorenzo ! rise, at this auspicious hour ;
 An hour, when heav'n's most intimate with man ;
 When, like a falling star, the ray divine
 Glides swift into the bosom of the *just* ;
 And just are all, *determin'd* to reclaim ;
 Which sets that title high, within thy reach.
 Awake, then ; thy *Philander* calls : awake !

Thou, who shalt wake, when the creation sleeps ;
When, like a taper, all these suns expire ;
When *time*, like him of *Gaza* in his wrath,
Plucking the pillars that support the world,
In *nature's* ample ruins lyes entomb'd ;
And *midnight*, *universal* midnight ! reigns.

END of the NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

333 AS THOUGHT THE

I have been thinking of you very much lately, and
 wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are
 well and happy. I have been very busy lately,
 but I have managed to find some time to write
 to you. I have been thinking of you very much
 lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I
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